



Adapted by T. Chapman, 151, Fleet Street Jan. 1780.



Lord Grenville.



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Lord Grenville.

AN
IMPARTIAL REPORT
OF THE
DEBATES

THAT OCCUR IN THE
TWO HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT,

In the Course of the Fourth Session of the Seventeenth Parliament
of Great Britain, called to meet at Westminster, on
Tuesday the 21st of January 1794.

WITH
SOME ACCOUNT OF THE RESPECTIVE SPEAKERS,

AND
NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

INCLUDING COPIES OF ALL
STATE PAPERS, TREATIES, CONVENTIONS, &c.

By WILLIAM WOODFALL,
AND ASSISTANTS.

VOL. IV.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY T. CHAPMAN, No. 151, FLEET-STREET.

1794.

IMPARTIAL REPORT

OF THE

DEBATES

TWO HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

IN THE COURSE OF THE PRESENT SESSION

AND A YEAR OF THE PRESENT PARLIAMENT

NOTES AND DISCUSSIONS

STATEMENTS OF THE MEMBERS

BY WILLIAM WOODWARD

VOL. IV.

LONDON

PUBLISHED BY T. CHAPMAN, 20, BEECH-STREET.

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WOODFALL'S

PARLIAMENTARY REPORTS.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

SATURDAY, MAY 17, 1794.

MESSAGE FROM THE KING.

THE Order of the Day for the Lords to be summoned, having been read,

Lord Grenville rose, and presented a Message from his Majesty. The same having been read,

Lord Grenville moved, "That it be taken into consideration on Monday."

The Duke of Grafton attacked his Majesty's ministers, for bringing forward a message from his Majesty, stating that the country was in imminent danger, and postponing the investigation of the measure, which they meant to oppose to that danger, for forty-eight hours. His Grace alluded to what had passed in the House of Commons, and thence by comparison inferred that the ministers were deficient in that respect and attention which was due to the House, and to the dignity of their Lordships, as forming collectively in their Parliamentary capacity an essential, and at least a co-equal branch of the Legislature.

The Earl of Lauderdale concurred in opinion with the Noble Duke, and pursued the same topic, but carried it farther, by contending, that as a communication had been made to the other House of Parliament, and they had acted upon it, merely to state the King's message, and not at the same time to make the communication, was to degrade the dignity of the House, by treating them as if they were secondary, and subservient to the House of Commons. He asked on what principle it was to be maintained, that the House of Lords were not entitled by ministers to the same respect as had been shewn to the House of Commons? He, for one, should expect some further grounds to be laid before their Lordships, before he could consent to give his sanction to any measure which ministers might think proper to propose.

The import of the message was important and pressing; the sooner, therefore, the House knew, and could proceed to deliberate upon and discuss it, the better.

Lord Grenville rose to justify himself and the rest of his Majesty's ministers from the imputation urged against them by the Noble Duke and the Noble Earl. Far was it from their intentions to treat that House unbecomingly, or with the smallest disrespect; nor could he conceive, that, on a fair consideration of the proceeding of that day, any such inference was warrantable. The Noble Duke had argued, as if it had been the invariable practice and custom, when a message was brought down from his Majesty, for a motion to be made for an Address of Thanks for the same, and that it should be followed up by another motion, to resolve that his Majesty's message should be taken into consideration the very next day of the House's meeting. If the Noble Duke, from so long a seclusion from Parliamentary business, had forgot what the practice of the House was, it would not be amiss for the Noble Duke to reconsider the subject, and govern his political conduct accordingly. The mode adopted that day appeared to him to have been rather calculated to avoid censure, than to provoke it. The substance of his Majesty's message was confessedly of the utmost importance; was it therefore a matter of blame in ministers, that by the mode of proceeding adopted, they afforded their Lordships time for deliberation? Had the case been otherwise, had they brought in the message, and suddenly proposed a measure upon the subject, the House, with a much stronger colour of reason, might have complained of unnecessary precipitation and indecent hurry. The Noble Earl had mentioned the measure in agitation in another place, and had chosen to suppose that their Lordships were treated as the dependants of that House, at least that ministers meant to put them in that degrading situation. The Noble Earl well knew, that no such thing was intended, and that it was impossible, under the circumstances of the case, to act otherwise than ministers had done. It was perfectly clear, that his Majesty's ministers had not acted upon this occasion in a novel and unprecedented manner: There were a variety of precedents upon their Lordships' Journals, amply sufficient for their justification. If those precedents were not exactly followed, he wished to have the difference pointed out—the difference was, that his Majesty's ministers, as he had before stated, had given more time for consideration and deliberation than had been done upon former occasions. He wished particularly to call their
attention

attention to the case which happened in the year 1722, and which was to be found upon their Lordships' Journals: At that time there was a Message from his Majesty, stating the existence of a plot (Laver's plot) to overturn the existing Government; on that very same day, a Bill similar to the present was introduced and passed, and was sent to the Commons. The case of Counsellor Laver was a case in which the House of Lords had, without any additional proofs to the King's Message, passed a Bill in one single day: In the present instance, time was given to their Lordships for consideration, though the danger was of a nature that called for the speedy interference of Parliament. With regard to that House regulating their proceedings by the proceedings of the other House of Parliament, while so good an understanding continued between the two Houses as happily existed at present, it was not at all extraordinary, that the one House should be in some measure apprised of matters of an important and pressing nature in agitation in the other, and should regulate their own proceedings accordingly.

The Duke of Grafton said, he was afraid he must still differ with the Noble Lord about an essential point, *viz.* the constitution of that House. As long as the House existed—as long as the dignity of their Lordships remained, either in shape or substance, he would stand up in its support, in support of their rights and privileges, in the face of their Lordships, in his place as a Peer of Parliament; and he would also maintain the same argument to the people at large. He was obliged to the Noble Lord for the advice he had been so good as to give him respecting his political conduct; but he had long since adopted the line of politics he thought it right to pursue, and he had no objection to meet the most scrupulous inquiry into his political conduct, from the first moment of his public life to the present hour. He still continued to think the communicating a message of such importance, and then delaying to follow it up with the notification of some measure which appeared to his Majesty's ministers proper for the occasion, a degradation of the dignity of their Lordships, and an insult (if he might be allowed to use such a word) to the Legislature itself. It was well known that a similar message had been delivered to the other House, which his Majesty's ministers had brought forward that day before their Lordships, and that a communication had been made upon it.—Why was it not thought fit to make a similar communication to their Lordships? The Noble Secretary of State had argued, that moving that his Majesty's message be taken into consideration

on Monday next, would afford time for deliberation:—Deliberation on what? The House had heard his Majesty's message: That message informed them of the imminent danger. Upon what therefore were they to deliberate? If ministers had made the communication that had been made to the other House, or had proposed a measure in the outline, which they meant more fully to explain on a future day, there would have been real and serious ground for deliberation; but to talk of deliberation, with nothing to deliberate upon, was ridiculous and laughable. The Duke said, he had long seen the difficulty of the moment coming on; he ascribed it altogether to the pernicious counsels of his Majesty's ministers. He had given it as his opinion in private and in public, wherever he was, and had mentioned it as the inevitable consequence of the measures so ill-advisedly pursued. The Duke added some other pointed observations to support his assertion that its present proceeding was inconsistent with the respect due to their Lordships' dignity.

Earl Stanhope declared, that he should not be surprised at any atrociousness, at any treachery, at any wickedness that could be attempted under the sanction of his Majesty's ministers, after what he had lately seen practised in this country. With regard to the present measure, the ground and pretence for it was the most "impudent humbug" that ever ministers had the audacity to state, if his ears deceived him not. It was an inference neither supported by logic, by fair reasoning, or by truth of conclusion, drawn from a miserable collection of papers, most of them published two years ago. Those papers were written by a set of men, honest in their intention, though not rich, nor of high rank. They might from defect of education have been somewhat "inaccurate" in their expressions; but their intentions were clearly legal, as their professed aim was to obtain a redress of grievances by legal means. That such was their object, was undeniable from their frequent use of the term "legal" in all their writings. That the meetings these men had held, were not always considered criminal, was obvious to every man who was at all acquainted with the public transactions of the past twenty years. During the American war, a meeting had been convened by public advertisement; the name of which he cared not much about: It might be deemed a Congress, a Meeting of Deputies, or a Convention; but they assembled not in a corner, in a private room, nor an obscure place, but in the Council Chamber of Guildhall, where the Common Council usually sat. A principal member of this meeting was
a brother-

a brother-in-law of the present Noble Secretary of State; and there were many other Gentlemen present at it of character and credit. The design of the meeting was to deliberate on a reform of abuses, a redress of grievances, or a Reform of Parliament. [Lord Grenville shook his head.] The Earl said he cared but little what Noble Lords shook their heads, when he was stating a fact to which he was witness, as he was not ashamed to say that he was present with the other respectable persons he had alluded to at that legal meeting. Many persons, his Lordship said, of high rank and exalted station at this moment, had notoriously taken the lead in endeavouring to procure a Reform of Parliament. Even the minister himself had taken pains to be distinguished as one of its advocates; and a Noble Duke (the Duke of Richmond) had, in that House, proposed that every man in the kingdom should have a vote. After such persons had lent the weight of their characters, and the full extent of their great abilities, to promote such a purpose, was it to be wondered at that men of lower rank, of less ability, but not of less integrity, should have caught the flame, and attempted to tread in the same footsteps? If these humbler agitators of the question of Reform in Parliament had acted criminally, their prouder predecessors were equally criminal; and how hard a measure of justice was it to punish the weak by the hands of the strong, who had been able to gratify their ambition, and possess themselves of power! The present measure of ministers, his Lordship said, he considered as neither more nor less than obtaining a power to erect a Bastile in England, in order to immure every man who thought differently from ministers, and had spirit enough to assert and maintain his opinion publicly. He declared, that he had been guarded and cautioned without doors, against saying any thing that might bring himself into danger or disgrace; but in that House he had said, and as long as he was permitted to speak in it, he would say what he thought, provided it was not contrary to the rules of the House. Possibly he might soon be *bastiled*, he would therefore speak out while he had permission to speak at all. He cared not what happened to him, because, after the constitution was gone, self-existence was of no consideration. He did not wish to outlive the constitution a single moment. If the constitution warranted such proceedings as had lately taken place, it was not worth preserving. His Lordship took occasion to advert to the circumstances of the war, and said, if the news rumoured in town were true, the state of our prospects was deplorable indeed, and he begged leave to be understood as speaking from the authority of those who thought as ministers did
respecting

respecting the war, and did not think with him, who had uniformly deprecated the war, as a most fatal measure for this country to undertake.—If the news, such as report gave, were true, his Lordship said, it must cast a gloom on the mind of every man, who had the interest of his country at heart, however sanguine his hopes might be of its prosperous continuance, or its happy termination. He warned their Lordships of the danger of provoking the temper of the people of this country too much: He wished them to reflect on the dissatisfaction which the people must feel at the measures which Administration were pursuing to inspire terror into those who disapproved of their conduct. The erecting a Bastile in this country might answer the purpose of confining a few, but must certainly irritate the great mass of the people. He warned them of the probable consequence of such a conduct; he desired them to reflect on the steps that brought on the revolution in France, and on the prodigious efforts of the people in Paris the day before the Bastile was taken; all of which arose from the violent measures of the Executive Government to silence popular clamour. He said, he was anxious to deliver his sentiments freely and plainly, because that might possibly be the last opportunity he should have of doing so in that House—he therefore must declare, that men who would persist in such measures, deserved to have their heads brought to the block—and if there was a people still in England, the event might turn out as he had then suggested. With regard to himself, it was not matter of much consequence to him how they acted after this Bill should pass, for what were all considerations of property or possessions to a man wishing to be free, after he knew he was liable to be imprisoned for his opinion, and that at the discretion of another, who was neither bound to bring him to a trial, nor assign a reason for his confinement?

Lord Grenville's motion was then carried without a division. Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

SATURDAY, May 17.

SUSPENSION OF THE HABEAS CORPUS ACT.

About half an hour after four o'clock, the Order of the Day being called for, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer not being present,

Mr.

Mr. Sheridan observed, that it was the preceding day understood from the minister himself, that the business was to be brought forward precisely at four o'clock that day: He saw no reason why the House should wait for him, especially as he had been in the House, and had quitted it. Perhaps he was now taking a walk for his amusement; that was not however a sufficient reason for the House to wait; and as those who disapproved of the Bill openly, professed to wish for delay, for the purpose of affording to the Public an opportunity of knowing the nature of this most alarming measure, he should, without any further hesitation, move, "That the House do now adjourn."

Mr. Francis rose to second the motion, and said, that he did so for one reason, which was personal to himself, as well as for others of more importance; that not having had the smallest notice of a design to bring in so suddenly, and to carry through so rapidly, a Bill of such consequence as that which was then before the House; and not having conceived it possible that such a Bill could be so proposed and hurried, without giving Gentlemen a single day's time to read and consider the Report of the Secret Committee; he had unfortunately been absent the preceding day, and therefore he very much wished for a delay till Monday, on his own account. But he wished for it much more on account of the nature of the business, and the consequences which might follow to the nation, if such a business were precipitately concluded. He confessed that he was but imperfectly informed on the subject; but, as far as the information went, which he had been able to obtain, the object of the measure in question was, in substance and effect, to set aside the constitution by an Act of the Legislature. They who thought that such a question was serious and important, would allow that it ought not to be carried through without some pause, and without due time being allowed for deliberation; and, on the other hand, he did not see how they, who thought the business of so little moment, as not to be worth their attendance at the hour which they themselves had appointed, could think it worth their while to object to the adjournment.

Mr. Canning thought, that the superior and important business which necessarily occupied the minister, should suggest a sufficient apology to the House for that want of punctuality which accidentally, no doubt, had occurred at the present moment, and with which, however, he could seldom be accused. The motion therefore appeared to him captious and improper, and if the Hon. Gentleman (*Mr. Sheridan*) persisted in it,

Mr. Canning said he would take the sense of the House upon the subject.

Mr. Sheridan replied, that he knew of no business superior to the duty of a Member of Parliament in that House, nor any business more important. The business of that House acknowledged no superiority, it was paramount to all. The Chancellor of the Exchequer's presence was certainly unnecessary; for those with whom he had the honour of acting, on the present occasion, were determined to be found on their posts at the earliest and the latest hour. If the Hon. Gentleman (*Mr. Canning*) merely rose to prolong time by speaking, his speech was a very short one; if he intended it as an apology for the absence of his Right Hon. Friend (the Chancellor of the Exchequer), it was one of the poorest he had ever heard.

Mr. Canning, in explanation, said, that he did not mean the occupation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was superior to the business of that House, but superior to the occupation of any other Gentleman in it; and therefore, that he was entitled to greater latitude and indulgence than any other.

Mr. Rose, without adverting to the question of adjournment, contended, that the suddenness with which the measure had been attempted to be precipitated through the House, was not unprecedented; and quoted the example of 1722, when a similar proceeding was adopted, which was directly in point, and contradicted the assertion that the present measure was quite strange and unknown to the constitution. As some Gentlemen might then be present, who had not attended the preceding night, he begged that the Report might be read; which was accordingly done.

He conceived that though the intentions and machinations alluded to in the Report were known before, it was only from suspicion; and that they were destitute of the degree of proof which they now possessed, and therefore were not at that time such fit objects of animadversion in the way which was at present proposed.

Mr. Courtenay said, the Hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, rose (as the event proved) to speak against time, and so far he had indeed the advantage of the Hon. Gentleman (*Mr. Canning*) who had recently spoken on the same side, with this difference, that he saw that *Mr. Canning's* apology for the absence of the minister was so lame that he was determined not to make it worse, in consequence of which he had carefully abstained from saying one word on the matter. He knew of no duty paramount to that of a Member of Parliament.

ment. Perhaps the minister, after the severer duties of his office, was relaxing his mind with some fair lady: In such a case he could quote the poet in his favour—

————— a favourite cow
Awaits him near *yon* barley mow.

Even in the case of a suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act, under such circumstances, he was disposed to join in his apology, and would wait three quarters of an hour longer, in hopes that he would be able to dispatch his business in that time. [Mr. Courtenay was about to proceed, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer entered.]

Lord Wycombe seriously lamented the precipitation with which the Bill in question had been carried through that House; were the enemy at our gate it could not have been hurried with greater. He said, he had listened with the utmost attention to all that had been urged in support of that precipitation, but had not heard one argument that was worthy of a moment's consideration. It was stated, that the danger was pressing. If he desired to know, what danger? he was referred to the Report on the table. He was free to confess, that he could not discover in those papers any such danger; but he would readily confess, that the danger which he apprehended, would arise from the passing of this Bill.

The excellence of the *Habeas Corpus* Act was such, that if every fragment of the constitution was gone, Englishmen would find an asylum and a safeguard in it. Let Englishmen consider what they were about to do. When the *Habeas Corpus* Act was suspended, where was the boasted liberty of the press? Where was the boasted liberty of speech? And when deprived of these two, he would ask, what would they, what could they have to boast of? He therefore could not discern any inconvenience from a short delay in this matter, as he was persuaded that, in the interval, Gentlemen would reflect, and that every salutary benefit might be expected to result from reflection.

Mr. Burdon defended the conduct of the Committee of Secrecy; and conceiving it to be an extraordinary moment, when the dearest interests of the country were concerned, in such case, he asserted, there ought to be precipitancy, inasmuch so, that he should be wanting in his duty, were he not to oppose the motion of adjournment. The question then before the House was, whether traitors to their country were to be punished or not? Mr. Burdon said, he would have no objection to divide five hundred times, in order to carry the

present measure. The crimes of the day were unknown to the Constitution, and were more dangerous than an actual rebellion

Mr. Jekyll declared, that he would not submit to the insinuation that the people were conspiring against their country, without the fullest conviction; without proof the most positive in support of so odious a charge. Was any man's guilt to be proved by insinuations? It was a maxim in the law of this country, that every man was to be deemed innocent till he had been convicted by the judgment of his peers. It was true, that some persons were in custody on a charge of high treason; but was it to be supposed, if guilty, they would escape, if the present Bill were not passed into a law? The Right Hon. Gentleman (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) had declared in that House, more than once, and even so late as the night before last, that the majority of the nation were firmly attached to the present existing Government. Though he did not feel himself often disposed to unite with that Right Hon. Gentleman (the Chancellor of the Exchequer), yet he was happy to join him in that sentiment, because he could do it from conviction. If so (and that it was so, he was fully persuaded), why take such a violent measure? Why raise such an alarm for the purpose of punishing a few? If those men were guilty, there was a law to punish them. Why then not apply to that law? In the present situation of affairs, he should not boast with the Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Burdon) who spoke last, of the numbers of times he was willing to divide upon the present question, but he should think his labours well repaid to divide five hundred times in favour of the *Habeas Corpus Act*; the blessings of which could not be calculated, and of which he was very much afraid he was within a few hours of taking his last farewell. That Act was obtained by something like a miracle: Did Gentlemen recollect the history of it? In one stage it was carried in the Upper House by a kind of fraud; one of the tellers seeing a very fat Lord coming in, and knowing him to be a man of *weight*, counted him for *ten*. In the debate in that House upon the Suspension in 1722, Mr. Booth, then member for Chester, and afterwards Lord Warrington, had spoken so rationally upon the subject, had placed in so lively a light the general inclination of those in power to increase it, by infringing the rights of the people, that he could not do better service to the cause of liberty, on the present occasion, than by referring to that Gentleman's speech, as contained in the Report of those times, which was as follows:

A Speech against arbitrary and illegal Imprisonments by the Privy-Council.

" There is not any thing that an *Englishman* can claim as his right, that we value more than freedom and liberty; I mean that of the body; because imprisonment is a sort of death, and less tolerable to some than death itself: For by it we are deprived of all our earthly comforts. What is a man the better for having never so great an estate, never so great honour, or what else is desirable in this world, if he is restrained of his liberty? Now there are several sorts of restraints or imprisonments, and they are all forbidden by our law, unless the cause be very just and reasonable; it is not for bare surmises or vain stories that a man shall be imprisoned and hurried from his abode; but only for such cause as shall prove that it is for the good of the Government, and the support of it, that this or that man is imprisoned or restrained. Although the law has taken very good care, yet the subject is often abused in his liberty, sometimes by the Courts of *Westminster-hall*, sometimes by other courts and particular magistrates: But the greatest cause of complaint proceeds from the *Privy-council*.

" The *Privy-council* that is, though they have been much to blame in this particular, yet it is not a new thing that they practise; but this itch of sending for and imprisoning the subject upon vain pretences, has descended from one *Privy-council* to another, like an infirmity that runs in a blood; for no sooner is a man made a *Privy-counsellor*, but this spirit rests upon him. This mischief was early espied, even in *Henry III.*'s time, and several laws have been made to restrain the *Privy-council*.

" By the 9 *H. III. chap. 29.* it is declared, That no freeman shall be taken or imprisoned, or be disseised of his freehold or liberties, or free customs, or be out-lawed, or any other way destroyed, nor we will not pass upon him, nor condemn him, but by lawful judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land.

" By the 5 *Edw. III. chap. 9.* it is enacted, That no man from thenceforth shall be attached by any accusation, nor fore-judged of life or limb; nor his lands, tenements, goods, nor chattels, seized into the King's hands, against the form of the *Great Charter*, and the law of the land.

" By 25 *Edw. III. chap. 4.* it is declared, That from thenceforth none shall be taken by petition or suggestion made to our Lord the King, or to his Council, unless by indictment or presentment of his good and lawful people of the same neighbourhood, where such deeds be done, in due manner, or by process made by writ original at the common law; nor that none be put out of his franchises, nor of his freeholds, unless he be duly brought in answer, and free-judged of the same by the course of the law. And if any thing be done against the same, it shall be redressed and holden for none.

" By the 28 *Edw. III. chap. 3.* it is established, That no man, of whatever estate or condition he be, shall be put out of land or tenement, nor taken, nor imprisoned, nor disinherited, nor put to death, without being brought in answer by due process of law.

" And

" And by 37 *Edw. III. chap. 18.* it says, Though it be contained in the *Great Charter*, That no man be taken or imprisoned, nor put out of his freehold, without process of law, nevertheless divers people make false suggestions to the King himself, as well for malice as otherwise, whereof the King is often grieved, and divers of the realm put in damage, against the form of the said *Charter*; wherefore it is ordained, That all they which make suggestion, shall be sent with the same suggestions before the chancellor, treasurer, and his grand council, and that they there find surety to pursue their suggestions, and incur the same pain that the other should have had if he were attainted, in case that his suggestions be found evil: And that then process of the law be made against them, without being taken and imprisoned against the form of the said *Charter* and other statutes.

" In the 38 *Edw. III. chap. 9.* is contained the informer's punishment, in these words: It is assented, That if he that maketh the complaint, cannot prove his intent against the defendant by the process limited in the same article, he shall be commanded to prison, there to abide till he hath made gree to the party his damages, and of the slander that he hath suffered by such occasion, and after shall make fine and ransom to the King. And the point contained in the same article, that the plaintiff shall incur the same pain which the other should have if he were attainted, shall be but in case that his suggestion be found untrue.

" And still there is another law made 42 *Edw. III. chap. 3.* in these words: At the request of the Commons, by their petitions put forth in this Parliament, to eschew the mischiefs and damage done to divers of his Commons by false accusers, which oftentimes have made their accusations more for revenge, and singular benefit, than for the profit of the King or his people; which accused persons, some have been taken, and sometime caused to come before the King's Council by writ, and otherwise upon grievous pain against the law. It is assented and accorded for the good governance of the Commons, That no man be put to answer without presentment before justices, or by matter of record, or by due process, and writ original, according to the old law of the land. And if any thing from henceforth be done to the contrary, it shall be void in the law, and holden for error.

" These are laws that are as much in force as any statutes whatever, and ought to be as duly observed: But I beseech you consider to what a degree they have been violated by the Privy-council: How have they sent for gentlemen from all parts of the nation, upon mere flims and stories? No man could be quiet; but upon any groundless pretence, away went a messenger, to bring up that man, not considering the great charge and trouble they put the gentleman upon by it. I will mention only that of Sir *Giles Gerrard*; he was sent for up by a messenger, to answer to I know not what business about a *black box*, and who charged him with it: But when he came to be examined, it proved nothing but town talk, and what a pother did they make? In our country, when a man makes a great stir about a matter, and it ends in nothing that is significant, we say, *Billy has found a pin*; So I pray what did this hurly-burly of the *black box* end in, but nothing that

that was worth a straw? and to this mighty purpose Sir *Ciles* was fetched from his house in the country: And several other gentlemen have been thus used against law and reason. It's strange the Privy-council should not remember the Bill of *Habeas Corpus* which passed in the last Parliament, that might have brought to their remembrance these laws that I have mentioned, and might farther convince them how precious a thing we esteem liberty: It puts me in mind of the Petition of Right, and what I have heard and read after it was passed, how soon it was violated and broken.

"The Privy-council has been very unjust to these gentlemen whom they have molested by their messengers, in that they have not made their accusers to find sureties to make good their accusations as the law requires (37 *Edw.* III. 18.); for then idle stories would not be so current, by reason of the punishment inflicted on these false accusers by 37 *Edw.* III. 18. and 38 *Edw.* III. 9. which laws are grounded upon the word of GOD, *Deuteronomy*, chap. xix. ver. 18 and 19. But now such fellows as are mentioned in the 37 *Edw.* III. 18. and in the 42 *Edw.* III. 3. who make their accusation for malice, or for revenge, or for singular benefit, more than for the profit of the King, or his people; these, I say, shall be allowed to accuse honest men, though they cannot prove a word of what they say, and for these devices are we to be forced from our habitations to appear before the King and his Council. Methinks it's hard play, and yet what remedy have we left, but to sit down and be quiet? But without doubt the land intended a redress in these cases, for 25 *Edw.* III. 4. says, that whatever is done contrary to that law shall be redressed and holden for none; but it does not tell us how satisfaction is to be had: But since it is left uncertain, I hope for the future we shall so order it, that every man may have relief against this great oppression, and that I humbly move; for if we let this alone, we have an arbitrary uncontrollable power in the Privy-council, which will never stop till it has made the law subject to them.

"But I have heard it objected, that if this power of sending for people be not allowed to the Privy-council, then you put them in a worse condition than any Justice of Peace, because by his warrant he can send for any body in the county where he lives. I must in the first place deny this altogether; for the consequence is not true: In the next place, I say that the law is the best judge of this, whether the Privy-council ought to have such an unlimited power, and what the law has determined over and over again ought not to be disputed by us; besides, it is a thing of dangerous consequence, to put discretion into the balance with so many written laws, which conserve so dear a thing as our liberty.

"But the power of the Privy-council is not hereby made less than that of a Justice of Peace; for a Justice of Peace, it is supposed, will not send out his warrant but upon a just and reasonable ground: What Justice of Peace ever sent out a warrant of the good behaviour against a person, but he either first heard the party accused (which is the juster way), or else the matter was proved upon oath? Or when was any warrant of the peace issued

issued out, but it was grounded upon the oath of him that demanded the surety of the peace? And whatever warrants or precepts are granted by a Justice of Peace, they ought to be for just causes, or else he violates his trust: So the Privy-council may, upon a just accusation, send for any person; but without that, they cannot, and therefore I do not see wherein a Justice of Peace has a greater power than the Privy-council; or if he had, yet it would not be so great a mischief, for he can only send for any person that is in the county; but the Privy-council are not limited to this or that county, but their power extends all over *England*.

"But besides, it is unjust to be punished without a cause: Land restraint, or being debarred of liberty, is a punishment; and whoever he be that would have the Privy-council to exercise this power, when he has known what it is to be brought up by a messenger upon an idle story, let him then tell me how he likes it, and answer me if he can."

Mr. Jekyll concluded with saying, that he should give the motion of adjournment his hearty support.

Lord William Russell said, he should vote for the adjournment, being decidedly against the present measure. He conceived the question not to be, whether or not traitors were to be punished, but whether or not we were longer to possess any thing like a constitution in this country? a question which would cease to be debated, if the present Bill, unnecessary in its existence, and unlimited in its duration, were to be forced upon them. His Lordship said, if the history of this country was consulted, it would be found that it was no new thing in ministers to attempt to raise alarms. With respect to plots and conspiracies, the Rye House Plot could scarcely have escaped Gentlemen's recollection. Having such facts before his eyes, he should not be ready to charge the brave and loyal people of England with any conspiracy. The true object of the present question in his opinion was, whether, from a Report on the table, made up of transcripts from newspapers, the House, on the sudden impulse of the moment, was to abandon their dearest rights to the caprice of a minister, without examination or deliberation. He therefore said, he should vote for the present adjournment.

Mr. Yorke said, there was no man had greater respect for the precedents established since the Revolution than he had, because he was bred up with a veneration for such principles; and sure he was he would shed the last drop of his blood to preserve them inviolate. After alluding to the great ancestor of the Hon. and Learned Gentleman (Mr. Jekyll), who, he affirmed, if he were alive and a Member of that House, would not have supported the opposition, in which the Hon. and Learned

Learned Gentleman, at so critical a moment for the country, had concurred, with the cordiality and zeal of a convert, he stated, that the question was neither more nor less, than whether or not we were willing to make a temporary sacrifice to preserve that constitution, which we were all interested to preserve, by following those precedents which our ancestors in similar predicaments had afforded us. On the present occasion, we were proceeding with a greater degree of caution than had been always observed; for upon one occasion, the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus Act* had been effected without the previous prudence of referring the consideration of the grounds of it to a Secret Committee, as had been done in the present instance. The Committee, from whom the present Report came, were entitled to the respect of every one, and to that Report he was inclined to give the most implicit belief. Those who opposed the measure, argued that they had no right to take a step of such magnitude, without proof of some overt act done to justify so strong a measure; he was, however, the more anxious for its being speedily carried into execution, as he was convinced that prevention was better than cure; and that it was more prudent to meet the evil in the first instance, than attempt perhaps when it would be too late to apply a remedy.

Mr. Lambton declared, that, admitting the necessity of the present measure to be the whole question before them, he was decidedly of opinion, that ministers, and their friends, had totally failed in proving that necessity. In the former instance, that of Laver's plot in 1722, the necessity was proved by the actual existence of a plot, of which the framers were taken up, and some of them actually executed afterwards. To this point he was about to read an extract from a book—when he was called to order by *Sir William Yonge*, who considered it as contrary to the rules of the House to read the speeches of Members.

The Speaker declared the Hon. Member to be perfectly in order, drawing the distinction between questioning the words of a Member then of the House, whose words might be thus misrepresented, and reading speeches of Members long since dead.

Mr. Lambton resumed his speech, and professing his conduct not to be the effect of any desire to delay, but of a wish to state the grounds of his opinion, he proceeded. He referred to the speech of *Sir Robert Walpole* on a former occasion, when it was supposed that a conspiracy had been formed to proclaim the Pretender at the Royal Exchange. He inferred from this, that *Sir Robert* did not wish, under circumstances

like the present, to extend the measure. Mr. Lambton declared, he felt a conscious rectitude in the vote which he should give that night; he courted not popularity by a systematical opposition to the measures of Administration: So far from it, that, on his coming down to the House the preceding day, he felt a kind of pre-determination to support the present measure, from an expectation that some proofs of a plot would be brought forward. Let Gentlemen picture to themselves his disappointment, when he found nothing but what all the world already knew, produced as a ground for so strong a measure! From his infancy he had been taught to revere the *Habeas Corpus* Act as the great palladium of British liberty; and through life he would guard it as such. He had heard it said, that ministers would not abuse this power, if entrusted to them; he did not believe they would dare to do so grossly; but in his Parliamentary capacity, he felt that a constitutional jealousy was a duty imposed upon every Member: No man could deny, that to that jealousy were owing some of the most useful precautions and beneficial laws that this country possessed. So long as the *Habeas Corpus* Act existed, no man could lose his freedom. Certain he was, that the Report, that had been made, did not justify the suspension of that great palladium of our liberty. The Hon. Member had said, that he knew nothing of the Societies to which the Report referred: Their proceedings met his reprobation. He admitted that there might be persons in those Societies of desperate fortunes; persons that had every thing to gain, and nothing to lose; but when he admitted that, did he admit that those persons were so numerous and respectable as to endanger the constitution? Was the Executive Government so weak, as to be unable to oppose them, without being armed with new and extraordinary powers? On the contrary, was it not well known that, without considering the great extent of power which the present Administration had been so industrious in accumulating, the influence of the Crown was sufficiently adequate to all the ordinary, or even extraordinary cases, where it could be called into exercise? There never was a time at which the Executive Government was so strong as at present, when Societies were forming in all parts of the country in support of the State, and when a numerous and powerful militia was embodied.

Was not all England in arms, and ready to suppress any riots, which could shew themselves in any corner of the King's dominions? With all these safeguards, where could this mighty danger, which was to justify the present extraordinary and unconstitutional exertion, exist? In his conscience, he believed there was none; and, under that conviction, he could not

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Sir William Yonge assured the Hon. Gentleman who spoke last, that if every Member argued as he did, in a manly way, he, for one, would be pleased to hear him. He said, we had to deal with men of dangerous and desperate characters. When Cicero suppressed the conspiracy of Catiline, he was obliged to step beyond the strict letter of the law, as an Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Jekyll) might know, if he would take the trouble to read the translation of Cicero's speeches on that business. What had Sir Robert Walpole stated in the year 1722? That there was a set of men in the country, who had formed a design of overturning the constitution; that they had agreed to go to the Bank, and the Exchequer, and plunder them of all the money they might find in those places; and that they had held traitorous correspondence with France, from whom they solicited the assistance of 5000 men. The Societies, whose sedition was the cause of the present measure, had no doubt been guilty of similar intentions; and it was the duty of the House on the present occasion to do as our ancestors had done when similar dangers threatened the constitution. When the enemy had declared against us, and was in the field, we knew what we had to dread and to oppose; but a secret enemy could not be guarded against, and was therefore the most dangerous. Sir William said, there were stages in treason and sedition; and the question was, whether persons were to be taken up before they had completed their progress to an overt act of treason, or afterwards? It clearly appeared that a conspiracy had been formed to settle a Convention that might supersede the power of the Legislature. Upon these grounds he would vote against the motion.

Mr. Curwen strenuously supported the motion, and declared himself to be of opinion, that nothing but the most urgent and pressing necessity could, in any degree, justify the present measure; consequently, if the minister was in possession of any facts not yet brought forward, which he conceived could induce the House to give their assent, he would do well to produce them; as yet not a shadow of necessity had been exhibited.

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bited. It was also, in his conception, highly proper that the country at large should be allowed reasonable time to judge of the necessity; and he was convinced, if that were the case, that House would have their table covered with addresses against the measure. He had no hesitation in saying, that he always conceived the minister had been deceiving the country with false and ill-founded alarms, and he had not the least doubt upon the subject. If, however, it could be proved that there did exist any real ground to apprehend danger, and a delay were granted to allow men to judge of that; or if the Bill, instead of unlimited duration, was to be passed as an experiment for a short period; he might in that case be induced to give his assent.

Mr. Burdon recalled to the recollection of the House, the ill consequences that might ensue from any delay in the present proceeding. Without this Bill, there would be no power of apprehending persons on suspicion, however strong. Without the fullest proof, the most dangerous enemies of the King and constitution might walk at large, meditate their mischief, and proceed in preparation for its most effectual execution. The House was aware that three or four persons were in custody on suspicion of treasonable practices. Gentlemen would remember, that while the *Habeas Corpus* Act remained unsuspended, it was impossible to keep such persons in custody for any considerable time. It might be necessary to detain persons of that description; because, if sufficient evidence was not had against them at one time, it might be at another. The consequence of delay would be the escape of those individuals. In order therefore to strengthen the hands of ministers, and enable them to avert the threatening danger, he should be for proceeding with the Bill with all possible expedition.

Mr. Baker thought the present a measure which involved the safety of the constitution; he therefore expressed his regret at his being under the necessity of differing, upon so important an occasion, from those with whom, at other times, he felt it his happiness to coincide; but upon this important crisis he could not resist the conviction of the necessity of the measure proposed. This measure, if fit to be pursued at all, ought in his judgment to be rendered as effectual as possible; those, therefore, who thought it ought to be adopted at any time, could not possibly consent to an adjournment. Undoubtedly the proceeding went to the suspension of one of the most essential Acts in the Statute Book; but, were the Report to be properly considered, it would be found that the safety of the country depended upon the speedy adoption of the measure. Delay was proposed for the purpose of consulting the sense of the country upon

upon it. Would Gentlemen have meetings called throughout the kingdom for that purpose? or were such meetings the proper mode of deciding upon the propriety or necessity of measures, which, by the constitution of the country, were entrusted in the hands of the Executive Government? In differing, however, on the present occasion from Gentlemen of the Opposition, he begged not to be supposed to throw the slightest imputation either upon their principles or conduct, both of which, he was thoroughly convinced, were actuated by the best and purest motives. It had been said, that the Societies, referred to in the Report, taken in the whole, were comparatively few in number to the rest of the country, and therefore no danger was to be apprehended from them. Would it be denied, that a few men of dangerous and unprincipled designs were capable of frustrating the best intentions? And, in fact, was it not owing to a few men of this very description, who had wormed themselves into these Societies, that they had fallen into that misconstruction and disrepute that they were at that moment labouring under? The present Bill was founded on the Report of a Secret Committee, appointed by ballot from among the Members of that House: He admitted, certainly, that it would have been better, and had a greater appearance of fairness, if, on that ballot, the choice had not wholly fallen upon one description of persons, and that some of the Gentlemen constituting the Opposition had been included in it. Such as it was, however, he believed the individuals of it to be men of honour; as such he could not but give credit to their Report; he could not therefore refuse to concur in the measure which that Report seemed so strongly to require.

Mr. Milbank thought the common law of the land quite adequate to the correction of the evils complained of, and on that account considered the present extraordinary measure to be unnecessary: He should therefore vote for the adjournment.

Mr. Serjeant Watson said, he was glad the question of precedents had been started, as he considered one precedent where practice and prudence were clearly united, worth a hundred arguments built on theory. The present situation of affairs would be found to justify the intended measures beyond former precedents, in two points particularly; the one, that the conspirators on former occasions were, unlike the present description, men of character, independent of their particular offence; the other, that their object was not, like the present, to overturn and annihilate all vestiges of our constitution, but to substitute one family in the room of another, in one particular branch of the Legislature. He perfectly agreed

agreed in the praises bestowed upon our constitution ; but he did not therefore agree that we should never suspend any part of the essentials of it. On the contrary, he was decidedly of opinion, that, when necessity called for it, both prudence and discretion demanded that we should rather sacrifice a part for a time, than risk the loss of the whole for ever. Convinced that the present measure, if adopted at all, should be adopted with all convenient speed, he gave his negative to the motion of adjournment.

The House then divided on the question of adjournment :

<i>For the adjournment</i>	37
<i>Against it</i>	161
<i>Majority</i>	124

BILL VESTING PECULIAR POWERS IN GOVERNMENT.

The question being put, "That this Bill be now read a third time,"

Mr. Grey said, he could not but maintain that the plan mentioned in the Report was not accompanied with any proof that bore the minister out in his conclusion, namely, that the *Habeas Corpus* Act ought to be suspended, in order to check those proceedings, and prevent the accomplishment of the object of the Societies in question. He objected to this measure, because it would exempt ministers entirely from all responsibility. To allow ministers to act as they pleased secretly, would be the least of two evils ; because then, if they proceeded to violate the law, without or against evidence, they would, at least, be acting under the terror of impeachment ; but here they were to be permitted to proceed without any foundation on evidence, as they should please, without any responsibility whatever. The Committee who framed this Report had been appointed by ballot ; the manner in which they were chosen did not deserve the name of a ballot ; an assertion, which he defied the boldest Gentleman present to deny. He differed from the Committee in all their conclusions from the evidence they reported ; and he doubted whether all the evidence that ought to be before the House was yet before it : He believed that the Committee were either deceived themselves, or wished to deceive others ; and that an attempt was now made to make the House parties in the imposture. Much stress had been laid upon precedent ; he confessed that precedent had little or no weight with him against principle ; but he maintained that the reason of the thing, even according to precedent, was against the present measure. He compared the precedent of 1722 with the present case ; a precedent which he said was neither so dangerous or alarming

as the measure then urged for acceptance. On the occasion of Laver's plot, his Majesty had declared from the throne, that the conspirators had, by their emissaries, made the strongest instances for assistance to foreign powers, but being disappointed in their expectations in that respect, they did not stop there, but, confiding in their own numbers, and not discouraged by their former ill success, they resolved once more upon their own strength to attempt the subversion of the government. For this purpose, they provided several sums of money, engaged a great number of foreign officers, received large quantities of arms and ammunition from abroad, and thought themselves in such readiness, that if the plot had not been timely discovered, it was hard to say where it would have ended. A doubt had been insinuated on the last night, whether, if he had lived at that period, he would have been as ready to oppose that measure, as he now was to oppose the present. This, if it meant any thing, was intended to convey the idea, that he was not ready to assist in strengthening the hands of the Government when needed. To all such insinuations he should only answer, as he had done on all similar occasions, that, as they merited his contempt, they should meet with his silence. The next precedent in point of time was that of 1745, but that case was also very different. A rebellion at that time raged in the very heart of the country; a considerable number of men had actually appeared in arms, taken some holds, and in a few cases defeated the regular troops of the country. Another precedent occurred in 1777; the proceedings on that occasion he proposed to be read by the Clerk from their minutes, in order to prevent all doubt upon the subject. The House would then find that a rebellion raged in America. What was the deliberation of the House on that occasion? On the 6th of February leave was asked to bring in a Bill to suspend the *Habeas Corpus Act*. After a very warm debate, leave was given; it was brought in on the same day, read a first time, and ordered to be printed. On the 10th of the same month it was read a second time; on the 13th it was committed; on the 14th the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council of the city of London presented a petition against the said Bill, which did great honour to their good sense and patriotism; after which the Bill was reported, and ordered to be printed; and on the 17th of the same month it was read a third time.

In the course of the debate on this important and alarming measure, it had been said, that it was highly improper to appeal to the Public for their sentiments upon it. Such doctrine was not very consistent with the conduct of the minister on
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former occasions. Was that House to be reminded of that display of affectation with which he had, in so many instances, professed to appeal from their decisions, to what he termed "The Public Voice?" Was it then a right and fitting thing to be done, only when the event was likely to prove advantageous to himself; but when there appeared any danger of the Public differing from him, was it to be reprobated as indecent and unconstitutional? Of that description was his memorable appeal in 1784. Of the same description was the use made of the public voice upon the subject of the slave trade, wherein it was naturally and fairly supposed, that House might be influenced and quickened by the strong expression of the public opinion. Upon a similar principle did the minister act in 1782, when, upon his defeat on the subject of Parliamentary Reform, he had recourse to resolutions at the Thatched House Tavern in St. James's-street, in concert with John Horne Tooke, and those unfortunate gentlemen who were labouring under the severities of conviction, and still severer sentences, only for persevering in those sentiments which others had abandoned. The Right Hon. Gentleman had then resolved, "That considering it was in vain to look to Parliament for a regeneration, originating within itself, it be recommended to the People throughout the kingdom to assemble during the ensuing summer, in districts, for the purpose of an application to Parliament upon that subject." Would it be said, that the object of those meetings was not to supersede the functions of Parliament, but to make application for reform? What then, upon the face of their proceedings, as contained in the Report, could be attributed to the present Societies, but a recommendation of what they call a Convention, for precisely the self-same purposes, only that, because the word *petition* was not expressly mentioned, the absurd and iniquitous design was imputed to them of superseding that House in the exercise of their functions? What was the conduct of the minister in the year 1782, when his pretended sincerity for a Parliamentary Reform had been defeated in that House, by a motion for the Order of the Day? He had abandoned it for ever. William Pitt, the reformer of that day, was William Pitt the prosecutor, aye, and persecutor too, of reformers now. He who thought fit to inflame the passions of the people, and to instigate them to a contempt for the House of Commons then, would not at present allow the people to judge of their own rights and dearest interests, but persecuted, with the real bitterness of an apostate, his own partner in the question of Parliamentary Reform. He had that very day been examining as a prisoner John Horne Tooke for persevering in his sentiments. This
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same William Pitt, who had once taught the Public to believe that nothing honest was to be expected from the House of Commons, and that the people should do every thing for themselves, now insisted that the people should do nothing for themselves, but should submit implicitly to the House of Commons the right even of their personal freedom. What was the natural inference from all this? but that this famous reformer only wanted to obtain the confidence of the people, in order to betray their interests, and sacrifice their rights. What were these acts of which such complaints were made in the Report of this Committee of Secrecy? Nothing more than that a set of people had expressed a determination to pursue, by legal means, the object of Parliamentary Reform. He for his own part was ignorant of any of these Societies, except from report; he was not a member of either of them; he had even disapproved of some of their plans: That however was not a time for him, on account of some difference of opinion upon speculative points, to abandon them to the fury of their apostate foe. There might be imprudence in some of their measures; there might be among them men of desperate fortune and sinister purposes: But if any evils had arisen from the doctrine of applying to the People, instead of applying to Parliament, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he would confidently assert, had been the chief cause of that evil. He would ask, in what country, or in what societies, were factious men not to be found? If such were frequent, were they more so than corrupt and vicious ministers, who, in pursuing the increase or preservation of their ill-gotten power, trampled upon all rights, and violated all duties? If the one description of men were to be found, how true was it, that they were in general produced by the ill-timed and malevolent severities of the other! It was asserted, that these Societies, with the word Reform in their mouths, aimed in their hearts at overturning the constitution; and this assertion was grounded upon an expression of theirs, that a reform was not to be hoped from that House, but from the People. What was the object of these people? "Their ostensible object," said the minister, "is Parliamentary Reform; but their real object is the destruction of the government of this country." How was that explained? "By the resolutions," said the minister, "of these persons themselves; for they do not talk of applying to Parliament, but of applying to the People themselves, for the purpose of obtaining a Parliamentary Reform." If that language were criminal, Mr. Grey observed, he was himself one of the greatest criminals. He did not scruple to assert, that from the House of Commons he had no hopes of a Parliamentary Reform;

that he had no hope of reform, but from the people themselves; that that House would never reform itself, or destroy the corruption by which it was supported, by any other means than those of the resolutions of the people, acting on the prudence of that House, and on which the people ought to resolve. That point they could only accomplish by meeting in bodies. Such was the language of the minister in 1782; but he did not know what his sentiments were now, for who could know the sentiments of an apostate, who had no rule for his guidance but his own conscience?

An Hon. Member (Mr. Windham) had, upon a former debate, asserted, that the doctrine of universal suffrage was only fitted for the refuse of the people; it might be so, but if it were so, of that description precisely were William Pitt and the Duke of Richmond. The Duke had been the advocate for universal suffrage, and in support of that doctrine the Right Hon. Gentleman had been most strenuous. In proof of this assertion, he quoted the Duke's letter to Colonel Sharman, wherein he had laid it down, "That attempts at a partial Reform had been so often and so vainly made in the House of Commons, that nothing more was to be expected from that quarter; and that all Reform, if ever it took place, was to be looked for from the people alone." These were the sentiments of the Duke of Richmond at that time; but he had accompanied these sentiments with a plan, precisely what the Societies now recommend, "universal suffrage, and annual representation." What then had these persons done, more than the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Duke of Richmond? And what had those victims, Messrs. Muir and Palmer, the severity of whose punishments would force even apathy itself to exclaim, said or done more than this, to expose them to their present sufferings? Had the papers of the Duke of Richmond been seized upon that occasion, and had it been moved thereon to suspend the *Habeas Corpus* Act, would it have been borne for a moment? And yet the only difference was, that those who then sat on one side of the House at present sat on the other. The Bill under discussion went to a general suspension of the rights of the subject, viz. to give an unlimited controul to the executive power. And what had been discovered by examining the fine velvet bag which the minister brought into the House in so solemn a manner? Nothing but what every body knew twelve years ago, and what these Societies had thought fit to reprint and publish in the year 1794. It was for this that the *Habeas Corpus* Act was to be suspended, and the personal liberty of every individual in the kingdom was to be placed in the hands of the King's minister. He
agreed,

agreed, that in extreme cases, extreme powers should be given; and if the case were made out, he was ready to accede to the measure proposed; but was there any such case established? What was the charge brought against those Societies? A design to overturn the constitution. They professed only to aim at obtaining a reform in the representation of Parliament. He did not pretend to be learned in the law; but he always understood, that nothing but overt acts were legal evidence of intention. What was the overt act by which the charge was attempted to be proved against them? The proposing to call an Assembly, or, as it was termed, a Convention. This, at the most, could be only construed into sedition, even if it could be proved that their designs were different from their professions. He wished to know, by what construction of law, or of common sense, it was, that we were to conclude men intended what they did not profess; that when they said, they meant to obtain a Parliamentary Reform by constitutional means, they intended to pull down the constitution by force? The law afforded means to punish those who acted unjustly, and that was sufficient in this case. He was sure, that if this measure were submitted to the people at large, they would express their abhorrence of it in such a manner, that it would be impossible to pass it, even through that House. But supposing, merely for the sake of argument, that those Societies were dangerous, was that Convention, so much talked of, likely to assemble so soon, that Government would be unable to prevent that danger? Nothing like it; he verily believed, the real reason for this dispatch was, the conviction of the minister, that if he did not pass it by stealth, the Public would not suffer him to pass it at all. He asserted this on the conviction, that, if observations of this kind were not made, and the public attention called to the subject, a blow might soon be given that would destroy our liberties for ever. This measure was part of that system of alarm which had been adopted to keep the Public from seeing their real situation. He had no doubt, that when this business came to be properly examined by the Public, as very soon it would, the deception would be discovered; and those who endeavoured to expose it, by opposing the present Bill, would be thanked by the Public for their exertions. Perhaps the minister had another trick to play. If he should dissolve Parliament soon after this, he might possibly derive some advantage for a time from it. He did not know whether that was his intention or not. It might be the remaining trick he had to play; but he believed it would be the last: Be that as it might, Mr. Grey said, he had done his duty in opposing this Bill, and he was confident he had laid down sufficient ground for rejecting

it. As a contrast to the present Bill, and the manner by which it was attempted to be passed, he desired that the proceedings on the Journals of the 6th of February 1679, might be read; which being done,

Mr. Canning observed, that the Hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, appeared to him to have argued the question upon grounds not only too narrow in themselves, but also inconsistent with those principles which he himself seemed to have adopted at earlier stages of this business. He had formerly contended, that in cases of extraordinary emergency, little attention ought to be paid to precedents; but on the present evening, in direct contradiction to that practice, he had argued the question upon precedents merely, without any general reasoning whatever. It was curious to remark how Gentlemen shifted their ground, and passed over those precedents which were against their arguments. In the precedent alluded to of 1722, ministers had not had the same support of which they could avail themselves on the present occasion, for then there was only a message from the Crown; but at present the message was followed up by a Secret Committee, whose Report evinced the necessity there was for the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act. There were, at that period, traitorous correspondences carrying on for the purpose of restoring the expelled family; but they were carrying on, in the instance of the day, for the purpose of subverting the constitution, and introducing republican anarchy on its ruins. Were we not, therefore, to imitate the caution of our ancestors, and to apply the same remedy to the one grievance which they had applied to the other? Or, even if there was no precedent in favour of such a measure, were we not justified in devising new and extraordinary remedies for singular and unheard-of offences? Good God! exclaimed *Mr. Canning*, how could Gentlemen oppose a measure that was so obviously necessary? Was the House to be told that these Societies had no correspondence with foreign enemies, whose object was to subvert and overturn the constitution? It had been stated, that during the administration of Sir Robert Walpole, time was given from Christmas to May for Members to study the subject; and it had been objected, that, though ministers were in possession of their present information at the beginning of the session, they did not think proper to bring forward any proposition on the message till now. What had been said of the precedent of 1777, so far from being in point, was diametrically opposite to the present subject, and was of singular importance. That precedent differed from the present instance in this, that it had for its object the preventing a Congress in America; whereas

whereas this plan was designed to hinder one from assembling in Great Britain; and since the House had seventeen times declared their apprehensions of such an event, it was not requisite for him to add a single word upon the subject, especially after what had fallen from a respectable Member (Mr. Baker), who had till this time given his support to the Hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Fox). When precedents made for Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House, they were enforced with the utmost energy, animation, and pertinacity; but when they made against them, they were scouted and reviled. Thus it was during the war; if our troops, or our allies, obtained a victory, it was immediately said, that this was no uncommon case, and was a thing that even the enemy expected; but if any failure happened, it was magnified immediately into a defeat, and the measures of Government, and the conduct of our commanders, were implicated without the smallest delicacy or reserve. He was willing to grant them either argument; but he did not think it candid or fair, that, to serve their own purposes, they should prey upon both. He would not argue as to the proof of the danger that induced his Majesty's ministers to suspend the *Habeas Corpus* Act; the Report of the Secret Committee justified the measure, and he was willing, for his part, to take the word of Government. It was observed by Gentlemen, that if time were given, petitions would crowd from all parts of the country, and cover the table of the House; and it had been also remarked by a Learned Serjeant, that such petitions would not flow from the people legally assembled, but from those very persons whose conduct authorised the present measure. Mr. Canning declared, that he was not to be intimidated by petitions from any quarter, as long as he was convinced that he acquitted himself justly as a Representative of the People, for the benefit of his country. He felt himself, so far, in a high and exalted situation, paramount to any such consideration; and as long as he exercised the authority delegated to him consistent with the dictates of his conscience, he was not to be biased by any instructions; let them flow from whatever quarter they might. Mr. Canning then adverted to the conduct of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he had stood forward an advocate for Parliamentary Reform; what he thought on that subject at present signified but little. He, however, entertained the same opinions with his Right Hon. Friend; he supported him in those opinions, and he agreed with him, "That though such a Reform might be not improper for discussion in time of peace, yet it was a proposition that ought not to be agitated in times of tumult and storm." This was not a period when

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Gentlemen should take a partial view of a subject; they should not look to a part, but the whole. The observations which had been made on the supposed political apostacy of his Right Hon. Friend, had no relation to the question in debate, and were in themselves so weak and futile as to be hardly worth attention; though, perhaps, it would become him to consider the advantages which would result from this measure, contrasted with the evils which might arise from the loudly threatened secession of the Hon. Gentleman and his associates. He himself had no hesitation to declare, that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer in future should return to his former opinion, it was probable that he might again agree with him. If ministers were to proceed in this business, they were threatened with the vengeance of the people, and Parliament was menaced with the diminution of its numbers; but he did not perceive the direful consequences that would result to the country if such threats were carried into execution. He was of opinion, that any such secession would be counterbalanced by the good that must arise to the nation from carrying into effect the judicious measure submitted to the consideration of the House. With regard to the people, he had a better opinion of their good sense, than those who supposed that they could not distinguish their friends; they had been put to the proof by the public subscriptions proposed by ministers; and however that measure was decried, it was found that their pulse beat in perfect unison with that of Government. Mr. Canning concluded by observing, that however he, with his friend, might be threatened with secessions in the House, and disturbances abroad, yet they would never be brought to consider themselves as the ambassadors from foreign states; but should continue to know and feel their own dignity, and wait for the subsequent approbation of the people.

In ordinary times it was the duty of the House to see that every part of the constitution was kept in repair, but now it was their duty to protect the whole. He knew that the Members of that House were considered as the best guardians and protectors of the people, with whom every pulse and artery moved in unison with those of Parliament.

Mr. Lambton explained, and said, that Sir Robert Walpole had strong grounds to induce us to believe, that the conspirators, in his day, had applied for 5000 men to foreign potentates; but not a word had been advanced to shew, nor was the least evidence given to prove, that any of the Societies of the present day had applied to France for any number of men; nor had they proclaimed at Charing Cross a Republic one and indivisible. In 1745, the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act

was

was moved for under circumstances totally different from the present. A rebellion existed, and the unprincipled Lovat had notorious traitors in his house, and under his protection. Arms had been transmitted to Scotland to the rebels; and so cautious was the minister of that day, in adopting so strong a measure, that he did not venture until the rebellion had actually broken out. The cases therefore were so far totally distinct and dissimilar.

It was perfectly consistent in Mr. Grey, he thought, to argue on precedent, though denying its authority, as it was the only argument to which the other side seemed disposed to attend. He denied his having admitted that the least degree of danger existed; all he had said was, that he believed there might be men in the country of bad intentions and desperate views. Their number and influence he had thought very insignificant. To the Friends of the People he had belonged, and should continue to belong, while they adhered to laudable and constitutional principles.

Mr. Baker declared, that he too had belonged to the Society of the Friends of the People (as they called themselves) as long as he could adhere to them with safety.

Mr. Courtenay commenced his speech with an ironical eulogium on the brilliant abilities of Mr. Canning; he admired them, he said, exceedingly; but he did not know whether he most admired the arguments he displayed, or the ingenuity with which he defended his Right Hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. An Hon. Friend of his (*Mr. Grey*) had pointed out a fact, and the Hon. Gentleman had confessed it, by admitting that the minister was an apostate; and, through complaisance, had declared, that he himself was one also. He had declared his friend guilty, and taken guilt upon his own shoulders. He had continued (*Mr. Courtenay* observed) by professing, that he participated in his Right Hon. Friend's disgrace, and pleased himself, that if he should hereafter resume his former principles, he should incur the same penalty. The Hon. Gentleman seemed attached to his friend, as necessary probably to promote his fortune:

Thus a light straw, whirl'd round with ev'ry blast,
Is carried off in some dog's tail at last.

With regard to the arguments which had been adduced, he must say, that he had not heard a single syllable uttered, that could make him change his opinion as to the impolicy and absurdity of the measure in debate. After bestowing the highest eulogium on the *Habeas Corpus Act*, *Montesquieu*, in his *Spirit of Laws*, had pronounced it the palladium of English liberty;

liberty; an Act that never ought to be repealed; nor, indeed, should any Englishman, who knew the value of his liberty, suffer it even to be suspended, however short the time proposed. Nothing could justify the suspension, but great and imminent danger to the state; and the actual existence of rebellion. During the rebellion of 1745, the people were not only notoriously disaffected to the family on the throne, but religion was mixed with their disaffection. The exploded doctrines of the divine right of Kings influenced mens minds, and every thing dangerous was expected to arise from the circumstances of those troublesome times. When the Act was suspended during the American war, America was voted in a state of open rebellion; it was conceived at that time, that several persons might come over and influence mens minds; Lord North, however, introduced a clause, that the penalties of the Bill should not attach to any person who had been for a limited time out of the kingdom. Mr. Courtenay contended, that the Report presented by the Secret Committee did not state any distribution of arms to have taken place, neither did it mention that any correspondence had been kept up with the enemy. He said, that even Mr. Reeves had not produced any evidence on the subject; and if a witness had been suborned merely to sanction the danger which ministers professed to apprehend, he should conceive it nothing more, on their part, "*than a pious fraud.*" From considering the circumstances in their present point of view, he must aver, that there were no just or good grounds for the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act; and was free to confess, that it was one of the artful delusions which had been practised before, merely to agitate and alarm the public mind, to turn it aside, and divert it from reflecting on the circumstances of the war. It was calculated to destroy the social intercourse between men, and to make each person afraid to trust his neighbour. It had, Mr. Courtenay said, been reported that morning, that the Committee had since discovered further matter, and were in full possession of competent proof of the existence of a dangerous and alarming conspiracy; but as that proof was not brought forward, he had a right to infer the direct contrary, that on farther examination no such proof would be found. He declared himself at a loss to conjecture how his Majesty's ministers could adopt those measures which they so much reprobated in a neighbouring country; for certainly the same thing had been done in France by Barrere and Robespierre. When they saw themselves threatened with danger, they had instantly discovered a plot, which they submitted to the Committee of Public Safety, before whose absolute authority the victims

victims of their dislike or disapprobation were immediately sacrificed. So far the Chancellor of the Exchequer had precisely followed their example, and had proved himself perfectly skilled both in simulation and dissimulation—[*A loud cry to Order.*]

The Speaker said, that the Hon. Member would recollect, he must refrain from any personal reflection, which the decorum of debate had expressly forbidden.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, he was uncertain whether the sentiments of an individual Member should interfere in any case with the general orders of the House; but he was free to declare, that nothing which fell from the Gentleman in question (Mr. Courtenay) could possibly be offensive to him.

Sir George Howard said, he was the oldest Member of that House, and was of opinion, that all personality was irrelevant to the subject of debate, and that it too often occurred, and ought to be dispensed with altogether.

Mr. Courtenay replied, that if the Right Hon. Chancellor of the Exchequer had waited for him to finish his sentence, he should have been spared the mortification of hearing his rebuke. He intended to have said, if suffered to proceed, that Lord Bacon remarked, that there could be no great minister *without* simulation and dissimulation. As to what the Right Hon. Gentleman had said with respect to himself, he was convinced, from his complacency and benignity of countenance, that he was really sincere, and so far could not charge him with dissimulation. Mr. Courtenay next adverted to a hand-bill, which he received coming to the House, and which had been circulated with great industry, and read with no less avidity. Perhaps it was a specimen of one of the future Reports of the Secret Committee. It was to the following effect:

“Treason! treason! treason! or England’s danger and deliverance! being a circumstantial account of the deep and desperate plots lately discovered, for delivering up the Duke of York, and all the British and allies, into the hands of the French, by Captain W—— to be cut to pieces.—Also an account of the escape of the Hon. A—H—R—— from the New Prison, in Dublin, to France, where he carried intelligence to the enemy. Together with the apprehension of J—S——, Esq. and Captain W——, with their examination. To which is added, an account of the dreadful insurrection and revolution in Poland, where the King is imprisoned, and in danger; with great and wonderful news from France.”

It was evident that no proof existed of a plot to overturn the constitution, but the Right Hon. Gentleman knew it from what surpassed all proof—from intuition.

Mr. Courtenay next pointed out the danger of arming the Executive Government with so much discretionary power. When ministers became exempt from responsibility, their conduct was too often regulated by caprice and injustice. They justified every act of oppression on the plea of state necessity. Much had been said of the clemency of ministers in the business; but on that subject he must say, that he would not trust much to their humanity. He instanced a circumstance relating to Messrs. Muir and Palmer, gentlemen of respectability, and of as good education as many Gentlemen in that House. He had proofs in his possession of the humanity of ministers with respect to these gentlemen. Mr. Secretary Dundas, he asserted, from a letter which he had copied, had been applied to, that these gentlemen should not be treated as common felons; but the application, it appeared, had proved fruitless; and they would actually have been bolted down in the hold with common culprits, if they were not suffered to remain in a damp and confined room, in company with a dozen of soldiers. This act of humanity proceeded from the feelings of a serjeant; for a British soldier had sometimes as much feeling as a British minister. In consequence of these, and other circumstances, he did not wish to entrust the King's ministers with the power to take up and confine whom they pleased. He mentioned the circumstance to give Mr. Dundas an opportunity of contradicting it if he could, and would conclude with declaring, that he should give every opposition in his power to the Bill, because it struck deeply at the very existence of the constitution, as subjecting innocent persons to extreme oppression, and as being introduced by persons for whom, as ministers, he had the utmost contempt.

Mr. Secretary Dundas said, that with respect to the charges brought forward against Government by the Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Courtenay), no imputation whatever could lie. With regard to the humanity of his own conduct upon the occasion, he should leave that to the judgment of those who knew him in public and private life. The information, that he had caused or commanded these persons to be treated as common felons, from whatever quarter the Hon. Member might have received it, he must say, was a direct falsehood; on the contrary, he had said to many persons who had applied to him in behalf of these unfortunate men, that however he might differ with them in the opinion of their guilt, and the justice of their banishment, he was desirous of paying every attention to their

birth and rank in society, which the nature of their situation could possibly admit; and he pledged his veracity as a gentleman, that every order which he ever issued with regard to their treatment, had been to that purpose. That any of those gentlemen ever applied to the Crown for mercy he positively denied; for the petitions which were presented on their behalf, one and all of them, begged the interference of the royal prerogative upon the ground of the illegality of the sentence, and the injustice of the punishment, and were therefore not applications to the mercy, but to the judgment, of the Crown. There was a petition presented from the parents of one of those persons (Mr. Muir), to permit him to be supplied with necessaries to render his voyage comfortable. He had heard of this petition being presented, and, though convinced of its informality, suffered it to take its effect, without any interference on his part; but when the friend, who had this petition presented, visited Mr. Muir in the hulks, and informed him of the step that had been taken in his favour, Mr. Muir, instead of being grateful for the intercession of his friends, expressed his resentment that any person whatever should trouble themselves concerning his affairs; that he desired no mercy; that he gloried in what he had done, and considered his sufferings, in the cause in which he had engaged, an honour, and not a punishment. That gentleman would have considered Mr. Muir wrong in his intellects, had not he told him, that he had been visited by certain *illustrious persons*, who, perhaps, might have infused into his head this wild enthusiastic contempt of punishment, and disdain of mercy. Such was the statement of the facts with regard to those convicts; and, admitting the legality of their sentences, and the justice of their punishments, which that House had sanctioned, he did not think there could be any thing imputable to the Executive Administration on that head. With regard to the measure immediately before the House, it had been asserted on a preceding night, that that Bill was unsupported by precedent, and that ministers were contending for a repeal of the *Habeas Corpus Act*, and the destruction of the rights and privileges of the subject, and the subversion of the constitution. It seemed to be now the fashion to feel extremely sceptical with regard to precedents; none were allowed to be in point, unless the circumstances which gave rise to the adoption of the former measure exactly corresponded with the present emergency. This coincidence of circumstances might never occur; nay, it was almost impossible an exact coincidence ever should. It was always sufficient for the adoption of any measure, that the pressure of the moment demanded such an

extraordinary interposition, and that was the question to be at this time discussed. It might, perhaps, be of some importance to consider the question of precedents; and, in his opinion, it would, in this case, be sufficient to enumerate the whole, and from such enumeration to draw an inference that would justify the propriety of the present application to Parliament. Since the Revolution, the *Habeas Corpus* Act had been suspended no less than nine times; during the best times of this country, and under the best and wisest ministers that ever governed it. Had it been found that, during any of the numerous suspensions of this Act, the dreadful consequences painted in such *sombre* colours had ever followed? Had any historian ever said, had any man ventured to alledge, that the rights and privileges of Englishmen suffered any diminution? Had they not survived these calamities, and been amply enjoyed by their posterity? Former Parliaments, on similar occasions, had not hesitated to vest such an authority in the Executive Government, without fearing that so salutary a measure, under such circumstances, would subvert the constitution. For the truth of that assertion he appealed to the best historians of this country; they established the fact; and he was on that account the more surprised at the grounds on which the present opposition to the measure was founded. The necessity, it might be said, was more apparent on those occasions, and the danger more formidable than on the present; but, for his part, he would rather have to contend with an open and avowed enemy, than to resist the secret poison that operates unseen, and against which it is therefore more difficult to provide an antidote! Let no man, however, be so hardy as to say, that correspondence with a foreign enemy was a thing impossible, or that it could not exist. It had been said, that the persons who were now conspiring against the constitution, were not men of high rank and property, but men without property, without influence, and therefore unworthy notice: In his opinion, that increased the necessity of applying a speedy and effectual remedy to the mischief; because such men had much to gain from anarchy and confusion, nothing to lose. When men of that description set about reforming the constitution, their association became a conspiracy for plunder; they naturally declared war against every thing rendered respectable by rank and authority, and were not retarded by any scruples in the means of prosecuting their infamous designs. It was not a Parliamentary Reform would satisfy these men. The resolutions of one of their Societies expressly declared, "That some things were not to be submitted to either with or without the sanction of Parliament."

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All the Societies certainly did not go so far; but at the same time he had no hesitation in saying, that a convention which had for its avowed object *universal suffrage* and *annual parliaments*, could only exist by subverting the Monarchy and the Parliament, and on their ruins would introduce anarchy and desolation.

On the subject of Parliamentary Reform, it had become fashionable for reformers to resort to the conduct of his Right Hon. Friend (the Chancellor of the Exchequer): But would any man say, that he ever held opinions similar to those professed by that Right Hon. Gentleman? He was railed at for apostacy, but there was no specification of the principles on which he acted. The Duke of Richmond was also occasionally introduced as the friend of such a measure, and his sentiments quoted with peculiar avidity when they answered the purposes of certain Gentlemen; but at other times his political opinions were not treated with either much delicacy or attention: If the Duke of Richmond ever held those opinions, it was but a proof that a wise man might adopt a very foolish theory. It was very true, men might form in their closets, speculations, theories, and plans of reform, for their amusement, which might be such as could not, or would not, be gravely stated for the purpose of being put in execution. Such opinions of his Grace had given rise to much declamation; but those which did equal honour to his head and heart were passed over in silence. That proposition of universal suffrage and annual Parliaments was such a one as neither the Noble Duke, nor any other friend to his country, would attempt to bring forward at the present period, when the only effect of it could be to propagate the same spirit which had desolated France. None of the Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House, however, maintained that doctrine; though the Hon. Gentleman who last year brought forward the subject of Parliamentary Reform, said that he would prefer universal suffrage to no reform at all; a very imprudent declaration, which he was sorry to hear from a Gentleman of his character and abilities. It was fashionable to raise the cry against his Hon. Friend (the Chancellor of the Exchequer), because he had changed his opinion on the subject of Parliamentary Reform. Had none of those Gentlemen, who called him an apostate, ever changed their own opinions on the same subject? Had they not found it necessary to consult times and seasons? If not, why had not the Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Grey) who presented the petition from the Friends of the People last year, praying a reform in the representation, renewed his motion, this year? (*Mr. Grey* replied across the table, "Because it could

could not be made with safety.") Then that Hon. Gentleman had thought it proper to consult times and seasons, and places; and God forbid he should drive him from that sober way of thinking: He rejoiced that he had adopted it. At the time when that Hon. Gentleman had declared himself the advocate of a Parliamentary Reform, he was warned that the question would soon get into other hands, who would pay very little regard to his views or intentions; he was then advised to reflect how inadequate he would feel himself "*to sit in the whirlwind, and direct the storm.*" Would the Hon. Gentleman at present say that these predictions are not fulfilled? Would he now say that persons, of a very different description from those with whom he chose to act, had not now taken up the subject? The plain fact was, that Parliamentary Reform was either pursued on the plan of universal suffrage, and annual Parliaments, or it was made a stalking-horse to conceal the ambition of individuals, and their infamous designs against the constitution. It was true, the Society of the Friends of the People had refused to co-operate with the Corresponding Society. He could wish, however, that when they rejected their proffered assistance, they had done it in terms less polite, and more strongly expressive of an abhorrence of the infamous designs of the other Society; for the whole conduct of the Corresponding Society plainly shewed that they had nothing less in view than universal suffrage and annual Parliaments; that was, in other words, the total subversion of the constitution. He begged leave once more to repeat, that he meant no reflection whatever on the Hon. Gentleman's conduct, in having declined the renewal of his motion for Parliamentary Reform this session of Parliament; on the contrary, he highly applauded his prudence and discretion. At a moment like the present, there was more true courage in keeping back, than in an obstinate perseverance. With respect to the obscurity of those men, that was a circumstance which particularly called for their suppression. The most obscure men in France were those who contributed most to the revolution; and he must again say, he would rather grapple with an avowed enemy and open rebellion, than contend with that secret and silently administered and spreading poison, against the operations of which no prudence can guard, no sagacity effectually provide.

Mr. Grey rose to explain. After thanking *Mr. Dundas* for the personal respect shewn him in the course of his speech, he said that he had undoubtedly visited *Mr. Muir* on board the hulks, and had found him exactly as that Right Hon. Gentleman had represented him to be; a man animated by strong enthu-

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enthusiasm, who conceived that he had committed nothing wrong, and who did not therefore feel his sentence as an ignominy. To that enthusiasm he had not given, nor did he conceive it was possible to give, any additional strength. On his application to Mr. Dundas, in favour of these unfortunate men, he was also ready to admit, that the Right Hon. Gentleman had shewn every disposition to alleviate their sufferings. On one point of Mr. Dundas's argument he thought it necessary to set him right. When he had mentioned across the table, that he had postponed his motion for a Parliamentary Reform, because it could not be made with safety; what he meant by the expression was simply, that he did not think it would meet with the desired success: He did not wish to expose it to the cavil and depreciation of which the enemies of the measure would avail themselves. Nothing could be further from his thoughts than to state the present season as unfavourable to the measure of reform.

Mr. Courtenay said in explanation, that he had not meant to reflect on the character of Mr. Dundas personally. He had, on the contrary, furnished him with an opportunity to vindicate himself from a charge, which, when he read, he at the same time declared that he did not wholly believe. It appeared, however, that blame must rest somewhere, as those unfortunate men were indebted to the lenity of serjeants and intendants for indulgences which they could not derive from the humanity of ministers.

Mr. Sheridan rose, and observed that he must do the Secretary of State the justice to say, that from him, the persons who applied in behalf of those unfortunate Gentlemen (*Muir* and *Palmer*) had experienced every polite attention. That his Hon. Friend (*Mr. Courtenay*) meant no reflection on the character of the Right Hon. Gentleman he was well assured; his sole intention was, by a statement of circumstances of which he had been informed, to give the Secretary of State an opportunity of vindicating himself from the imputation. He certainly concurred with his Hon. Friend (*Mr. Grey*) in paying every tribute to the humane attention of that Hon. Gentleman, with respect to those persons, except in the instance of his not applying to the fountain of mercy to procure a remission of their sentences. It had been asserted, that no such application had been made in their behalf; but the fact he believed was otherwise; for, at the time of his presenting a petition to that House in their behalf, in which he admitted they rather claimed justice than prayed for mercy, he had been instructed to state, that its delay was occasioned by the petitioners waiting the result of a petition to the Queen praying for mercy.

mercy. Though the Right Hon. Gentleman was well entitled to every compliment due to his politeness, attention, and humanity, in that transaction, he was sorry to say, they did not owe so much to his candour, when he stated to the House the circumstance of "certain illustrious visitors," as he was pleased to deem them, having waited on those unhappy men. He was not ashamed to confess that he was one of those illustrious visitors: Indeed, he should be ashamed, from a consideration of all the circumstances, if he had not; for, in his mind, to visit those whom he thought the victims of persecution, oppression, and injustice, reflected honour, and not disgrace. However that might be, his advice to them was to plead for mercy; and neither he, nor his Hon. Friend who accompanied him, uttered a single sentence that could possibly tend to strengthen the minds of those men in their contempt of punishment, or enthusiasm in the cause in which they had engaged.

With regard to the immediate question before the House, the arguments which he had that night heard in support of it, were, in his opinion, totally irrelevant; unless it was admitted that calling a Convention, for the purpose of effecting a Parliamentary Reform, was a crime little short of high treason. The Right Hon. Gentleman had endeavoured to establish himself upon the strong ground of precedent; and for this purpose had cited no fewer than sixteen. [*Some person from the Treasury Bench cried out, Nine precedents; you mean sixteen divisions; alluding to the number of the divisions on the former night on the Bill.*] If he thought that five hundred divisions would rescue his country from the impending evil, and preserve the great bulwark of liberty unsapped, he would divide the House five hundred times upon it. But these nine precedents, the Right Hon. Gentleman, with his usual prudence, had forborne to examine, because he was well aware, the result of such an examination must make against his argument; for if it could be shewn, that the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act proposed, was for a purpose totally different from the grounds of all those former suspensions to which he had alluded, his precedents, upon which he relied so much, must be totally abandoned: And though the constitution might have survived these nine suspensions of the *Habeas Corpus* Act, it was possible it might not survive the tenth; and he much feared that it would not. Immediately after the Revolution, when a Prince out of the regular line of succession was called to the Throne, it was not a matter of surprise that there should exist in the country many persons attached to the old succession, and disaffected to the new family, and that those disaffections should break out in open rebellion and revolt: It was therefore

therefore frequently found necessary, for preserving the constitution, and the family lately established on the throne, against the effects of such rebellion, to vest in the Executive Government extraordinary powers; and when, at the same time, the Prince expelled from the throne, aided by a foreign power, was attempting to effect his restoration, the greatness of the danger, on such occasions, might well justify recurring to such a strong measure. But would the Right Hon. Gentleman say, that he would rather grapple with an avowed enemy, and open rebellion, than contend against the *secret* poison, and hidden practices; of those Societies. Was that the character of the danger to be apprehended? Did it wear the most remote feature of secrecy or conspiracy? No such thing: It had nothing of the feature or character of conspiracy; it was carried on in the face of day, in the presence of all the world. If this was to be called a conspiracy, it was the most open, garrulous conspiracy he had ever heard of. These extraordinary new-fashioned conspirators met openly in gardens, in fields, in public-houses; they announced, nay, even aggravated, their intentions in the public newspapers; every document relative to their redoubted conspiracy had been published long before the pompous Report of the Secret Committee. The remedy, in his opinion, was likely to produce something much more like a conspiracy; for, unless all those obnoxious persons who composed these Societies were cooped up in prisons, they would pursue in secret the same objects they had hitherto pursued openly, and thereby assume the colour, and probably have the effect, of a real conspiracy: For the measure that House was about to adopt, did not declare such meetings illegal: It did not declare the opinions they held treasonable; nor did it even state that a Convention for the purposes they intended would be criminal.

The Right Hon. Gentleman had censured the idea of universal suffrage as impracticable; but that was merely matter of opinion; for it was not asserted that the supporting that theory would be construed into actual guilt. Would Gentlemen, then, propose to imprison and detain all those who shall hold and avow that opinion? If that was their intention, it was a severity which must fail of its object; and ministers should be aware of the consequences of such a failure, from a review of their past conduct. Since the commencement of the French revolution, they had evinced a strong jealousy of a Parliamentary Reform; and had taken every measure to prevent its success; yet even from their own shewing, the result of their measures had been uniformly against their purpose. The proclamation, which was the first measure they adopted,

was avowedly directed rather against "the Friends of the People," than against any of those seditious Societies. What had been the result of that proclamation? Tumult and insurrection. Their next measure was spreading abroad a set of spies and informers; but these had only served to increase the general turbulence. Their last measure had been a severe system of prosecutions; and the result of these was, according to their own statement, "That a great part of the nation was now actually in a state of rebellion." Though, for his own part, he had a thorough conviction that none of those dangers actually existed. It was nothing but a trick, or political artifice, of the Committee who made this Report. He did not mean to cast an indiscriminate censure on all the Members who composed that Committee; it consisted of men, part of whom deceived, part were deceived; but every person must see something suspicious in its conduct. The manner and precipitancy of its proceedings were good grounds of suspicion. It wished to surprise Parliament into the strongest measures possible; measures by documents produced as novelties, of which every man in the kingdom had been previously in possession. Ministers themselves had long since been in possession of every fact relative to these Societies. Who had not long since heard of their having Serjeants to drill them in back rooms, of their having been arrayed at the *Cat and Bagpipes* and *Black Dragon*; and why did they not proceed upon these informations? Because they knew them to be false. On a sudden, Mr. Stone was examined before the Privy Council; all these plots revived; though it was notorious, Mr. Stone had nothing whatever to do with these Societies; so that if he had been engaged in any plot, there must necessarily have been two plots, as he had no connexion whatever with these Societies. The conclusion of the Report, which formed the only novelty of it, stated, that arms had been distributed to some of these Societies; but it was not stated, whether those arms had been furnished from Sheffield, or from some other place; or for what purposes they had been furnished at all; whether for the purposes of rebellion, or that each man, fearing the excesses of a Church and King mob, had determined to furnish his house with a musquet. No evidence of that kind was furnished by the Committee; and, in point of fact, it was an utter impossibility that such an array as was there suggested, could have been formed without the knowledge of ministers, and without such knowledge having been obtained long antecedent to this period. The early industry of the press had been exercised in an uncommon degree upon the present occasion, to second the ingenious management and dis-

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patch which had distinguished the production of the Report. In his hand he held a hand-bill, similar to that produced by his Hon. Friend (Mr. Courtenay), under the following very curious title: "The Downfall of Jacobinism, or the Plot discovered; to which is added the glorious Successes of the Duke of York, being an Extract from the last Extraordinary Gazette." This curious combination of events, however absurd it might seem, was nevertheless a strong proof of the diligence which had been used to excite and spread abroad the general alarm. That paper affected to contain some knowledge of the grounds of apprehension, and the examination of Mr. Stone, and the commitment of Mr. Adams to Newgate, &c. He would however appeal to every Member in that House, not of the Secret Committee, whether, under all the existing circumstances, they did not expect to hear, when they came down to the House, at least something new, if not to reap a full discovery of some earnest and pressing danger.

In the course of the last year they were told, that the system of prosecutions, and the associations of Mr. Reeves (which had done him such immortal honour), had totally changed the public mind; and in the close of the last Session of Parliament, in the King's Speech, they were told, that all the attempts against the constitution were completely checked; and, on the opening of this Session, his Majesty was again made to rejoice "on the steady loyalty, and firm attachment, of all ranks of people to the constitution." But to make assurance doubly sure, since that time, they had strengthened the hands of Government by passing an Alien Bill, a Traiterous Correspondence Bill, the new Levies, &c. &c. and the House was in the present instance called upon to declare that his Majesty had been completely mistaken; that all those efforts had failed; and that nothing less would be sufficient to preserve the existing Government, than an undefined exercise of arbitrary power, vested in the Executive Government! It had been asked, why Opposition would not take the word of the Secret Committee for the existing danger? He would answer, because they had not been required so to do. The Report was made in a way to take from the Secret Committee, and the ministers, all responsibility; and if the Commons should be imprudent enough to act upon such a Report, the ministers would not be responsible. It could not, therefore, be said, that they were asked to give credit which they had improperly refused. In such a power, obtained in such a manner, he was unwilling to coincide. What danger was to be apprehended of any improper exercise of this power? He felt in his mind every rational apprehension of well-founded fear. It was a power of the

most extensive kind, asked on very frivolous occasions; and he therefore thought it would be exercised on pretences equally frivolous. But whence had the sentiments of those Societies originally sprung? From the seeds first sown by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Burke, and the Duke of Richmond. Was it not ingenious in those men first to instil these principles, and then to persecute with such unrelenting severity, and unabating rigour, the proselytes to their opinions? Such conduct must tend to inflame mens minds, fill them with contempt for all public men, and make them doubt every profession of patriotism, or regard for the country, as insincere. From the writings of those Gentlemen, they could be clearly proved the authors of these sentiments, and of the fermentation which at that moment existed. Upon an examination of the Duke of Richmond's letter to Colonel Sharman, and of a Right Hon. Gentleman's letter to his constituents at Bristol, and comparing them with those papers on the table said to be seditious, the House would find no one leading idea in the latter, though perhaps expressed in less elegant language, which was not contained in the former. The seditious publications of 1794 said, "There will be a despotism:" Those of 1782 said, "Liberty is in danger." The Right Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Burke) in part of his writings, though he had since changed his sentiments, said, "we lose the spirit of an honest equality." Another passage in one of their resolutions runs thus; "Wicked contrivances are made to separate us; let us unite with the people." The question was, what was the conduct of those Gentlemen who, in 1782, stood forward as advocates of a Parliamentary Reform? Exactly the same as those of the present day. What was the difference of the times? Nothing, for that was not, any more than the present, a time of peace and tranquillity. The measure was agitated at the close of a long, unpopular, and destructive war, when the minds of the people were roused, and money was scarce; and the Parliament itself had lost its reputation, because it was supposed to have acted against the public interest. Let him ask if a Convention was held for the purpose of obtaining a Parliamentary Reform, were the delegates who attended such Convention to be taken up and imprisoned during his Majesty's pleasure? If that was to be the case, in his opinion, the only effect would be, that the jails would be filled with men whose criminality was undefined; and at the same time the measures would not accomplish their object, but tend to multiply Societies for Parliamentary Reform. If that Bill passed, as he was now apprehensive it would, and those who opposed it failed in their attempts to procure its repeal in the next Session of

of Parliament, it would be for them to consider whether or not they should ever set their foot again in that House, where all their efforts to preserve the few remaining liberties of their country were so obviously ineffectual. It had been asked, how much the House would be thinned by their secession. However inconsiderable they might be point of numbers, the loss of their Right Hon. Friend (Mr. Fox) alone, in the opinion of many even of those who voted with the minister, and of the country at large, would be irreparable. He would not pretend to advise his Friend how to act in so delicate a point; but it was too much to be expected, that men should incessantly toil without the most remote hope that the Public would benefit from their labours. That such was the opinion formed of his Right Hon. Friend, might be deduced from the following fact.

During the last election for Westminster, a gentleman of great respectability had again favoured him with his vote and interest, which he had for some time withdrawn, and promised to relate to him, at a convenient opportunity, his real reasons for that apparently inconsistent conduct. When an opportunity offered, he had inquired those reasons, and the Gentleman informed him, that he no longer thought Mr. Fox deserving of his patronage, after he had condescended to accept a place in the Exchequer, and consequently renounced his former support; but that support he could no longer refuse, when he found Mr. Fox had returned to his proper post, the head of Opposition.

Such was the opinion men entertained, that while his Right Honourable Friend (Mr. Fox) was in opposition to ministers, their measures would not only be watched, but improved.

Mr. Windham observed, that though much had been said in the course of this debate, yet, with the single exception of the Hon. Gentleman who spoke last, all that had any bearing or application to the subject in question, might be comprised in a nut-shell. As hackney-coachmen might charge either by distance or by time, so of the Gentlemen on the other side of the question, if judgment were to be formed by the length of the debate, it might be said that they had made great progress; if by the arguments used, they had made little or none. The plain question lay between the inconvenience of the measure on the one hand, and its necessity and applicability on the other. The *Habeas Corpus Act* was a valuable part of the constitution, and was to be preserved in common with every other part of it. A temporary suspension was proposed, as the best means of securing the future enjoyment of the blessings it afforded.

afforded. That measure had been often adopted before that day, without any inconveniences resulting to be put in competition with its good effects. Much had been said on the change that had taken place in a Right Hon. Gentleman's (the Chancellor of the Exchequer's) mind on the subject of Parliamentary Reform, but what had that Right Hon. Gentleman done which he had any reason to be ashamed of? He had only exercised the right of private judgment; and it was the unquestionable privilege of every honourable man to change his opinions on all occasions, when he found his opinions erroneous, or not fitted for the times. The arguments used by the Gentlemen who opposed that measure, appeared to him to be totally inconsistent. They supposed, that because the proofs of a conspiracy existing had been for some time in the hands of Government, these proofs had no validity: But no man, who wished to permit his reason to guide him, could deny that there were complete proofs of a regular system to overturn the constitution, when it appeared, in the first instance, that the designs of these Societies were clearly expressed, and their expressions were followed up by overt acts, tending to the perfection of those designs. Two years since, when these matters were spoken of, Gentlemen had called for distinct and particular proofs; but though it might then be clear to the apprehension and judgment of every man in the kingdom, that such things had an existence, yet instances were not so easily procured; and though one might even then have been brought forward, yet the reply of those Gentlemen would have been, "these are but particular instances, and not sufficient ground for a general allegation." But now, when the whole system of these proceedings was laid open, and the veil, which covered that iniquity, was boldly thrown off, they still affected to doubt its existence, and to undervalue the magnitude of the danger. "We disapprove (said they) of your method of correcting these abuses, even supposing they do exist. Severity is not the measure which should be adopted, you should apply lenient remedies." He however differed from them totally: It was his decided opinion, that if the present measure should not prove sufficiently strong, something stronger must be resorted to. The principle adopted by these Societies, that of universal suffrage, if once carried into practice, must put an end to the existence of that House. From that principle had originated the great and tremendous evils which had desolated the great and populous kingdom of France. The Hon. Gentleman had said, on a former occasion, that the advocates of the present measure should imitate the French Convention; but he had not told that House where this resemblance

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semblance lay. It was something like the resemblance between Macedon and Monmouth: "There is a river in Macedon and a river in Monmouth, and there are salmon in both." But if they said that the friends of that measure were like the French Convention in their conduct, they might, with as much truth, say, that they resembled the French Jacobin Clubs in theirs.

The severe language that had been used with respect to the Committee of Secrecy, not only on that but on a former night, deserved some comment. It had been termed a credulous or imposing Committee: Mr. Windham said they might call those who said so, an incredulous or imposing Opposition. He did not apprehend the same evil from the adoption of that measure, which seemed to alarm Gentlemen so much. The suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act conveyed no such terrors to his mind; it was a measure which had been frequently adopted in the best times of this country, and he did not recollect that it had ever been attended with any bad consequences. It was not fair to say, that, because the former measures of Government had not cured the present evil, they had therefore done no good. Mild remedies must be used first, and if these failed, recourse must be had to others more harsh. If the measure proposed should prove insufficient, recourse must be had to others more effectual. The thing must be done; and if the existing laws were too weak to check the mischief, laws of greater force must be made. There had been a plan laid, by men deeply read in the human heart, for the subversion of every existing government, republican as well as monarchical. America had been the object of that scheme, as well as other countries; and America had been aware of the fact, and taken measures to prevent the operation.

Mr. Windham avowed, that he would oppose all schemes of Parliamentary Reform, by constitutional means, as long as the authors of them should confine themselves to constitutional means; and when they departed from those, by every means in his power. These Societies acted upon a general principle of depression; they envied every man in the country who happened to be elevated above them by rank or fortune. There must always, he said, be a relative depression in all countries, and frequently the most numerous part of the community must be its objects. The leaders of these Societies used every endeavour to influence the minds of those people, and to draw them from the strict line of their duty, by misrepresentation and false argument: It was therefore highly dangerous that the great mass of the people, who composed the physical strength of the State, should be misled by designing men, and
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seduced from the right line of their duty. For these reasons he should give this measure his most decided support.

Lord George Cavendish said, that his mind was not so tainted with alarm as to give up all his former opinions, and trust ministers with extraordinary discretionary power, of whose general principles and conduct he did not approve. If he thought that any conspiracy existed, which the laws were not sufficient to check, he would give ministers every aid in his power; but although, on the present occasion, he should differ perhaps from those with whom to differ seemed almost like differing with himself, yet, till such a case was made out, he could not assent to the Bill.

Mr. Drake entered into a panegyric on the valour displayed in the war; and expressed his detestation of the demoniac proceedings in France, and his approbation of the Bill.

Mr. Fox rose, and said that he should not have troubled the House with any further observations on the subject of the Bill, after having given his opinion so fully upon it the night before, but for the very extraordinary topics which had been introduced by his Right Hon. Friend (*Mr. Windham*). If he had expressed himself warmly on the subject of that Bill, he begged leave to say, after the most mature reflection, that he did not repent of such warmth. He desired to be considered as repeating and confirming every assertion: It was a Bill characteristic of the worst times, and which he feared predicted much calamity to the country. We were hurrying into that most dangerous and alarming predicament, which would produce either the horrors of anarchy and confusion on the one side, or that despotism of monarchy, which *Mr. Hume* called "the euthanasia of the British constitution," on the other; in either of which he saw the complete extinction of liberty; and he dreaded to think what must be the shocking alternative which he, and other men who loved the true principles of the constitution, must be reduced to in the impending struggle. The Bill was characteristic of those violent times, when, instead of being guided by reason, we were to be put under the dominion of wild passion, and when our pretended alarms were to be made the pretexts for destroying the first principles of the very system which we affected to revere. Every warm expression, therefore, which he used the night before, upon reflection he justified and repeated; and even yet, when a moment was left, he deprecated the horror of passing that Bill into a law. He would pass over all the lesser topics of the speech of his Hon. Friend, in order to come to that most portentous part of it which had made an impression upon his mind never to be effaced, and which foretold the destruction

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of the British constitution. It was an argument upon which if the present measure was really founded, that he hoped would even yet make the House pause before they proceeded further. He had said, that to the existing evil of the Jacobinical doctrines, remedies ought to be applied in gradation. From mild remedies he would proceed to remedies less mild, from less mild to severe, and through all the degrees of severity. What by this argument was he to think of the present measure? but that it was only one step in his ladder, and that if that should fail of producing its effect, he had still remedies more severe in reserve. The Hon. Gentleman had tried already his gentle remedies; the Alien Bill was an anodyne; the Treasonable Correspondence Bill was also a gentle medicine; and as these remedies had failed of producing the proper effect, nay, as by the King's Speech it was said, that, notwithstanding these measures, the evil still existed with increased malignity, he was about to try this severer remedy; with the declared intention that if this should also fail, he had still more violent measures to pursue. When the experiment should have been made, and proved, like all the former, to have failed of producing the effects expected from it, he desired to know what must be the answer to his question, if, next year, enough of the constitution should remain to enable him to put a question to the Hon. Gentleman in his place—Would he go beyond that? After suspending the *Habeas Corpus* Act, what would he do more? Would he prohibit all meetings of the people so as to debar them from all discussions on political subjects, and prevent all free intercourse between man and man? And when that should be found ineffectual, would he give to ministers the power of making arbitrary imprisonment perpetual? Would he still further go on in the exact and horrid imitation of the men who now held France in anarchy, and establish a revolutionary tribunal, or what, perhaps, he would call an anti-revolutionary tribunal? Where would he stop? What limit did he propose to make? Was there no end to his plan of security, until he should accomplish the end of annihilating all doctrines that he might affect to dread, or destroy all the disaffected spirits which he might pretend existed in the country? It was of consequence to the House to see what they were doing. They were told that what they had done was not enough; and that even that might not be enough! Good God, what was to be done after that? Under the colour of pretended alarms, were we to go on to an unlimited infringement and demolition of all the strongest and most beautiful parts of the constitution? The Hon. Gentleman was offended at the comparison that had been made be-

tween the conduct of ministers and their adherents, and the conduct of the present rulers in France, and he had with great felicity quoted the comparison of the river in Macedon and the river in Monmouth, as there was salmon in both. With all respect for his wit, the Hon. Gentleman must however be content to incur the imputation of similarity, when his own conduct and that of the rulers of France was so similar. They had taken great pains to throw odium on the pretended designs of a Convention, on account of the word Convention. Let Gentlemen look at their own conduct, and see if it was not in substance the same as that of the present French tyrants. What was the conduct of the present rulers in France? From day to day they circulated stories of alarms, and plots, and conspiracies, and insurrections among the people, to inflame and agitate their minds, and to spread panic and terror over the whole country, that they might take advantage of their fear, and obtain unlimited power, to be exercised in carrying on and confirming that very terror. They inspired the double alarm of danger from conspiracy, and danger from the exercise of their own unlimited power, exerted as it every day was, in the most shocking murders, with hardly the aspect or form of judicial trial. What was the conduct of the ministers here? Precisely in the same manner they circulated stories of alarms and conspiracies, to fill the public mind with fear and, to use the jargon of the French, to make terror the order of the day. By spreading these false and idle alarms, they succeeded in obtaining powers destructive of the constitution, which, as in France, were to be exercised with such inhuman rigour, as to keep the country in double awe, and, by fostering indignation and discontent, give rise again to new jealousies, which would afford occasion for still further stretches of power. Thus they followed the example set them by the men whose doctrines they pretended to abhor, with the most shocking fidelity. Every part of their conduct was built on the French model, and he dreaded that it would be productive too certainly of the same effects.

The precise question for the House, Mr. Fox said, was, to compare the danger with the remedy. The pretended danger was, as we might collect from the documents that had been laid upon the table, documents that every one had seen published in the newspapers, that there was in certain Societies a tendency to a Convention. Whether the word Convention was a bugbear that was to be held up to terrify their imaginations, he knew not, but it was of consequence to inquire a little into the nature of the thing, and not to be startled at names. A Convention, he supposed, meant no other than a meeting

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meeting of the people; and if that meeting were for the discussion of any subject of general interest in a legal and peaceable way, there certainly was nothing in such meeting that could either call for or justify any such measure as the present. To a Convention that had for its purpose to overawe the Legislature, and to obtain any object, either of universal suffrage, or other wild and impracticable theory, he should not certainly chuse to give his countenance. If there was a Convention either of individuals for themselves, or of delegates of towns and districts, for the purpose of striving, by petitions and addresses to the three branches of the Legislature, to put an end to the present most ruinous and unprovoked war, he should certainly neither be ashamed or afraid, at least not until after the present Bill had passed into a law, to attend, and be a member of such Convention. What was to be dreaded from even the Convention that was threatened, which the laws of the country were not of themselves sufficient to check? If they meant, by their intended Convention, to overawe the Government of this country at a moment of such unprecedented strength as the Government now possessed, he would say that they were fit for Bedlam, and for Bedlam only. So perfectly and entirely was it possible for magistrates, in every part of the kingdom, to execute the laws, that he would venture to say, that if any man, or men, at such Convention, committed any illegal act, he or they might be sent to prison, and tried for the offence as securely as if no Convention existed. The danger then called for no such remedy, and it was not because any such remedy was necessary that the present Bill was introduced. It was to keep alive the passions of the people; it was to agitate and alarm their minds, to put them under the dominion of terror, and take from them the exercise of their rational faculties. Ministers knew well the dangerous predicament in which they stood: They had weakly, and, as he thought, wickedly, involved the country in a most disastrous war; every day plunged them deeper and deeper in the fatality which they had brought upon their country; they saw no hopes of extricating the nation from it with honour, nor of proceeding in it with success, and they dreaded all reflection on the subject: They knew that they had no safety but in depriving the people of repose; they knew that if the alarm should be suspended for a moment, and if men were allowed time and leisure for the exercise of their understandings, the war, and the principles on which it was undertaken, would be scrutinized and discussed. They dreaded to encounter so hazardous a trial, and all their measures had been directed to keep alive an incessant commotion, so as to suspend

every operation of the public intellect. For that reason a subscription had been set on foot; he said for *that reason*, because ministers had been open enough to acknowledge that it was not for money. It was, they had declared, to excite the zeal of the people. Zeal was one of those fervent emotions which would be favourable to their views, and which, while it lasted, would keep them from examining the objects of it. But the subscription, he supposed, had not succeeded to the hoped-for extent; that zeal which they had aroused was not equal, apparently, to the occasion, and they now strove to awaken a more powerful emotion, that of terror! In short, it was a Government of passion, a Government in which ministers strove to lull asleep all the sober operations of the mind, and to awaken only the fears and terrors of the heart. Reason they dreaded, for reason was their enemy. It was well said by a philosopher of great character, that all men dreaded reason who acted against reason: And certainly it was natural, and in the order of things, that animals, which, by their practice, counteracted the natural course and dictates of reason, should shrink, and dread as their enemy those who seem to be guided by its wisdom.

It had been said that the Committee had been spoken of in terms not the most respectful. He, for one, certainly could not speak of some Members of that Committee without expressing his high respect and regard for them. He was not among those who give up their personal friendships on account of differences in political opinion. A Noble Lord near him (Lord George Cavendish) had in very affecting terms deplored the circumstance, that, in the present moment, he differed from men so near and dear to his heart, as to make him feel it like differing from himself; so he might say that for some of those persons, though he had not ties of consanguinity, he felt so sincere a regard, and so poignant a regret at differing from them, as to make it like a parting from himself. His early habits of respect, his warm affections, all led him to that feeling; but the present was not a time to compliment men, or to withhold from the severe duties which conscience imposed, by recollections of tenderness and esteem. He must say, then, however highly he regarded some individuals of that Committee, that it was made up of two characters; men who were dupes themselves, or men who were willing to dupe others. Their whole Report was trifling and inconsequential; it told nothing which every man did not know before; for the last assertion about arming, the Hon. Gentleman had said, was merely supplemental, and was not to be taken as a component part of the Report. Then what did the

the Report consist of? Of a collection of papers, which had all been seen by the Public, and which, if they did contain any danger, was not a danger of that day. It was known by every one, and steps might have been taken on the subject, months ago. Their avowed intention was to procure a system of universal suffrage; and that the Hon. Gentleman said was what had destroyed France. However freely he might be disposed to agree with him, as to the wildness and impracticability of universal suffrage, he must doubt of the fact of its having been the cause of the destruction of France. On the contrary, universal suffrage was to be considered rather as the effect than the cause; for the book of the Right Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Burke) which had produced such effects (whether good or bad, he would not pretend to say) in England, had charged upon the French, that they had not acted upon their own principles, but had narrowed the suffrage in a way totally inconsistent with their own doctrine. Were they to argue theoretically or practically from the example of France, which the Hon. Gentleman so incessantly presented to them? Was every man, who had liberty in his mouth, to be considered as a traitor, merely because liberty had been abused in France, and had been carried to the most shocking licentiousness? He would venture to say, that if that was to be the consequence, fatal indeed would it be for England. If the love of liberty was not to be maintained in England; if the warm admiration was not to be cherished in the hearts of the people; if the maintenance of liberty was not to be inculcated as a duty; if it was not to be revered as our chief good, as our boast and pride, and richest inheritance; what else had we worthy of our care? Liberty was the essence of the British constitution. King, Lords, Commons, and Courts of Judicature, were but the forms; the basis of the constitution was liberty, that grand and beautiful fabric, the first principle of which was government by law, and which that day the House were going to suspend.

Mr. Fox then called upon the Hon. Gentleman to say, whether there was any true parallel between this country and the old government of France, that we should dread the same effects from Jacobinical doctrines, which that despotic government had suffered? France had no *Habeas Corpus* Act; France had no system of respect for the liberties of the people; it had not been because France had held out a mild and equal government by laws, that France had been overcome by the doctrines of Jacobinism. On the contrary, it was a fair conjecture, that if France had had a *Habeas Corpus* Act, and had not suspended it, if France had upon every occasion respected the

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rights and the liberties of the people, the doctrines of Jacobinism would not have prevailed over the established power. He stated this as not an improbable conjecture, nor did he presume to lay much stress upon such conjecture, but it was material to the Hon. Gentleman in supporting his argument, to prove that the old government of France had been overthrown, because there was a want of power; for his argument was, that we must go on, from measure to measure, until we should arm ministers with sufficient power to resist and overcome all innovation. The despotism of Louis XVI. had not been sufficient to save France from Jacobin doctrines. Were they to go beyond that despotism to give them greater security than France possessed? The doctrines of the Right Hon. Gentleman went to the utter extinction of every vestige of the constitution; and such was the effect of his principle, that it was impossible to limit the progress of his remedies; they were all to be hot medicines; he did not admit the possibility of doing any good by the contrary practice. If one hot medicine failed, a hotter only was to be tried; and thus he was to proceed, through all the race of the most powerful stimulants, instead of trying what the opposite course of cooling mixtures and gentle anodynes might produce. What the nature of his provocatives was he had not condescended to state. He had alluded to his former opinion, that if the laws of this country were not sufficient for the suppression of seditious practices, the laws of Scotland, not as they really existed, but as they were stated to exist, should be introduced; and so he supposed one of his plans was, that juries should decide by a majority instead of deciding with unanimity; and that men should be punished with sentences more rigorous than immediate death; that was, should be sent to die far from all the civilized world, merely on account of a political opinion; and these severities were to be introduced for what? Because any great body of people were disaffected to the state? No, no such thing! It was the boast of ministers, and their adherents, that every part of the country was most strictly united in love and attachment to the constitution. All this then was to be introduced, because some low persons, without property, and without consideration, in the country, were found to entertain opinions about a Parliamentary Reform that were thought to be dangerous. How long would it take to eradicate these opinions from the minds of these men? Did they mean to keep them all in confinement under this Bill? They would be forward, he supposed, to disclaim any such intention. What did they mean then to do? To suspend one of the grandest principles of the constitution of England, until there should be

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be found no men within the kingdom tinctured with discontent, or who cherished the design of Reform. If they meant to suspend the *Habeas Corpus* Act until such time, there was an end of it in this country. What did they declare by this to all mankind? That there was no period when it would be possible to restore to the country that grand and inestimable right; that the constitution of England was fit only for an Utopian society, where all men lived in perfect concord, without one jarring sentiment, without one discontented feeling; but that it was utterly unfit for a world of mortal and mixed men, unfit for any state of society that ever did exist upon the face of the earth, or that was ever likely to exist. Never, never then, upon this doctrine, was it probable that we should again recover that most essential part of the British constitution; for it was not the will of Providence that society should be formed so perfect and unmixed, so free from all passions, as to meet the ideas upon which it was contended that the constitution of England could be with safety conferred upon them.

It had been said, that the example of France threatened not only this, but all the countries of the world. Whatever the Hon. Gentleman might feel upon this subject, there were several countries who thought differently, or which at least did not seek their protection by similar measures. They found their safer course was in being neutral as to the war, and in preserving to their people the blessings of peace and industry. "But America even felt alarmed." If it was true that America felt alarmed, it would be wise for that House to observe what had been her conduct in that alarm. Had she involved herself in a *bellum internecinum* to exterminate French principles? Had she suspended her *Habeas Corpus* Act? Had she passed an Alien Bill? A Treasonable Correspondence Bill? Had she shocked every feeling, and every humane and considerate mind, by the scandalous rigour of her legal punishments? Had she plunged her country into a war, and loaded her people with new and excessive burdens? No; she had maintained a strict and perfect neutrality, as to the belligerent powers; and she had protected herself at home, by exhibiting to her people all the beauties of their own system, by securing to them all their privileges in their full enjoyment, by enlarging rather than abridging their liberties, and by shewing that, so far from dreading comparison, they placed their confidence in leaving to the free judgment of the people the most ample discussion of political doctrines.

With regard to the persons who composed those Societies, he certainly knew little of them; it could not be supposed that he entertained any partial opinion towards them, at least
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if men were to judge of the opinion they had always delivered of him; they had never failed to speak of Opposition, and of himself personally, with exactly the same expressions as they had used towards Administration. The same distrust of their conduct, the same avowed hostility appeared in their writings to both. They had certainly paid him personally a compliment, in mentioning him at the same time with the Right Hon. Gentleman opposite, as far as regarded the splendid talents of that Right Hon. Gentleman; but it was not equally flattering to him to be put on a comparison with that Right Hon. Gentleman, in regard to their right to the confidence of the Public. It was not likely, therefore, that he was actuated by any partial regard to these Societies; but he considered it as an unwise and illiberal course to take advantage of any odium that there might be against persons, in order to stigmatize measures which might otherwise be good.

Though there were among those Societies men of low and desperate fortunes, who might be very ready to embrace any enterprise, however hazardous, and though there might be others, whom he believed, from their characters, to possess wicked intentions, yet still that was no argument with him for casting a general obloquy on measures which were in themselves harmless. To deny to the people the right of discussion, because, upon some occasions, that right had been exercised by indiscreet or bad men, was what he could not subscribe to. The right of popular discussion was a salutary and an essential privilege of the subject. He would not answer long for the conduct of Parliament, if it were not subject to the jealousy of the people. They all entertained becoming respect for the Executive Government, that was for the chief magistrate of the kingdom, but their respect for the King did not prevent the vigilance of Parliament. In his opinion, the best security for the due maintenance of the constitution, was in the strict and incessant vigilance of the people over Parliament itself. Meetings of the people, therefore, for the discussion of public objects, were not merely legal, but laudable; and, unless it was to be contended that there was some magic in the word Convention, which brought with it disorder, anarchy, and ruin, he could perceive no just ground for demolishing the Constitution of England, merely because it was intended to hold a meeting for the purpose of obtaining a Parliamentary Reform. With respect to their plan, that of universal suffrage, he never had but one opinion on the subject. He had constantly and uniformly considered universal suffrage as a wild and ridiculous idea. When his Noble Relation, the Duke of Richmond, had one day taken pains to explain his ideas on this subject, a learned and ingenious friend

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of his said to him, with as much truth as wit, "My Lord, I think the best part of your Grace's plan is its utter impracticability." He had always thought that it was impracticable; and though he could not agree with the opinion, that rather than continue the present state of representation, he would incur all the hazards of universal suffrage, yet he was ready to say, that the measure of last year, the horrid and detestable prosecutions, the scandalous sentences that had been passed, and the scandalous way in which they had been executed, did not tend to make him wish less than heretofore for some reform, that should protect the country against these violations of good sense, propriety, and justice.

If the *Habeas Corpus* Act were suspended upon such an argument as had been advanced that night, and they were to go on step by step, as they were threatened, with the introduction of the Scots Criminal Code, with the extinction, perhaps, of the Trial by Jury, and he should then be asked what was his opinion, he did not know but he should be ready to prefer any change to such a horrid situation as the country would be there reduced to. He made no scruple to own, that the events which had lately passed in France, had made a most powerful impression on his mind. He should not do justice to himself, if he did not frankly confess, that they had served to correct several opinions which he previously held; they had served also to confirm many former opinions. They had convinced his mind of the truth of an observation of Cicero, one of the most common, which was early taught in their grammars, but from which, when a boy, his heart revolted. It was this:

"Iniquissimam pacem justissimo bello antefero."

He had, in the ardour natural to youth, thought this a most horrid and degrading sentiment. What, give up a just and glorious cause, merely on account of the dangers and perhaps the miseries of war! When he came to maturer years, he thought the sentiment at least doubtful, but he was at that moment ready to confess, that the events of the French revolution had made the wisdom of the sentiment clear and manifest to his mind. He was ready to say, that he could hardly frame to himself the condition of a people in which he would not rather covet to continue, than to advise them to fly to arms, and strive to seek redress through the unknown miseries of a revolution. Our own glorious revolution had been happily clear of all these horrors: That of 1641 had shewn a great deal of this kind of calamity; but the French revolution had exhibited the scene in its most shocking aspect. The more, however, that his heart was weaned from such experiments,

the more he detested and abhorred all acts on the part of any government, which tended to exasperate the people, to engender discontent, to alienate their hearts, and to spirit them up to resistance, and to the desire of change. The more he deprecated resistance, the more he felt bound to oppose all foolish and presumptuous acts on the part of Government, by which they shewed disdain for the feelings of the people, or by which they strove to keep down all complaint by inhuman severities. He was convinced that wise men, deliberately weighing the relative duties of government and people, and judging of human nature as it was, would see the wisdom of mutual concessions, would recommend incessant conciliation, and would deplore all measures which could exasperate and inflame the minds of the people to wish for the horrors of a change. Nothing was so clear from all the history of England, as that we had never been so fortunate as when the Government had conciliated the people; never so miserable as when a wretched system of persecution had been unhappily and unwisely adopted by ministers. Persecution had never been successful in extirpating opposition to any system either religious or civil. It was not merely the divinity of Christianity that had made it triumph; for other religions, certainly not divine, but which were founded in imposture, as well as a number of the wildest sects, had thriven and flourished under persecution, on account, as he believed, of that very persecution. The human mind was roused by oppression; and so far from yielding to persecution, exerted all its energies in consequence of the attacks it had to encounter. Was it believed, that if there was a party in this country, who cherished in their hearts the desire of reform, the sentiment could be extirpated by exercising over the individuals legal severities? Impotent were the men who thought that opinions could be so encountered. There were some things that were most successfully vanquished by neglect. America held out to us the true course and the wise feeling. Let us, like her, demonstrate to every man the blessings of our system! Let us shew that we not only were convinced that it was good, but that it would bear to be examined and compared with any other system! Let us make the people proud to court comparison; and strive rather to add new blessings to those they enjoyed, than to abridge those which they already possessed! Let us think for a moment what must be the joy which this measure would produce in France. How would it be received in the Convention? Barrere would, no doubt, triumphantly hold it forth as a proof that all the stories which he had tried to propagate in France, of there being a party in this country favourable to them, were true.

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At last, he would say, it had broken out to such a height, that ministers could no longer think the Government safe, and the constitution was to be suspended in order to protect the state against the French party. If any accounts of the true state of this kingdom had reached France, which told them that we were united almost as one man against all doctrines which led to anarchy, Barrere would hold up the present measure in contradiction to that faithful report, and say, that it was obvious there must be a formidable party in England for French doctrines, when one of the most beautiful branches of our boasted constitution was to be lopped from the tree. Nay, though he for one had always treated with scorn the idea of an invasion, he asked those who held out that fear to the country, if any thing could be more likely to induce the French to undertake such an enterprise, than by thus giving to them the impression that we were threatened with an insurrection at home! Some words had passed, as if he had the night before said that he would withdraw his attendance from the House. He thought it incumbent upon him to say, that he should act in this respect as upon reflection he felt it to be his duty to his constituents. But he certainly had not said that he should withdraw from the House. [He concluded with a strong admonition to the House on the present alarming measure.] He saw it was to pass; that further effort was vain; that the precipitation with which it had been hurried on, made it idle for him to hope that argument would induce them to hesitate; all that remained for him was to pronounce his solemn protest against a measure pregnant with consequences so fatal to the established order, and strength, and freedom of the country.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer declared, that from the lateness of the hour, and having but little inclination to go much at length into a question which had been already so fully discussed, it was not his intention to detain the House for any great length of time; and, indeed, the very able manner in which his Hon. Friends had already argued it, rendered it unnecessary for him to say much. The Right Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Fox) commenced, and had concluded, his speech, by holding out, as an incontrovertible argument, that the measures at present necessarily adopted by Administration, would impair materially, if not totally destroy, the constitution of this country; a mode of reasoning that he could never suffer to pass without a reply. Pursuing that strain of argument, the Hon. Gentleman had pronounced, in terms of unrivalled eloquence, a most pathetic funeral oration on the supposed departed liberties of British subjects, which he had stated as

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having expired with the introduction of the present Bill; a Bill, in his mind, nothing worse, or more dangerous in its consequence, than what had been known, from the experience and practice of our ancestors, to be a wise and proper measure, when the existing circumstances of the country demanded such a measure, and required that the hands of the Executive Government should be strengthened. That necessity, however difficult it might be to convince that Hon. Gentleman of its existence, who was not much inclined to be alarmed in any situation, he trusted, had been fully made out to the House, and to all those who had given themselves the trouble of bestowing the slightest consideration on the subject; and such necessity having been proved to exist, it came then to be considered, whether the danger was of sufficient magnitude to justify the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act, which, properly speaking, was the only question for consideration before the House. That measure, he granted, was of considerable importance; it was a remedy only to be applied when the emergency was so great as really to call for it. The fair question, therefore, which Gentlemen were to put to their own minds, was this, Whether the danger with which the government and the constitution of the country was threatened by the practices now exposed, was, or was not, greater than any danger which could result from putting into the hands of the Executive Government, a more than ordinary degree of power, for the purpose of resisting what they considered, and what Parliament considered, a very dangerous conspiracy? The Hon. Gentleman had carried his argument so far as to say, that if the Bill passed, all the rights of the people, and all the privileges of Parliament, would be at once destroyed; a doctrine which he could never admit, by whatever ability or eloquence it might be supported. On that point it was important for the consideration of the House, a point which had not yet been touched on by any of those who had argued the question, that the Bill was limited in its duration, was but a temporary measure, adapted to a present existing evil, and was to continue in force for little more than six months; and that it invested the Executive Government with a temporary discretionary power, to imprison suspected persons for that limited time, without bringing them to trial; all the rights of the people, and all the privileges of Parliament, remaining uninterruptedly the same, attaching all the time the same responsibility upon ministers to which they were liable in every other situation in which they acted, and equally answerable for any abuse of this power, if they should abuse it, as they were for the abuse of any other discretionary power which

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was vested in them. Stating the question in that view, which was the real and proper state of it, could any Gentleman think that all the liberties of the subject, and all the privileges of Parliament, would be so completely annihilated by the Bill, as to make it a question, whether a Member of Parliament ought, or ought not, to give up his attendance in Parliament; or the interest of his constituents? He would not do those Hon. Gentlemen the injustice to suppose that any of them thought so for a moment; and it would not be doing justice to their own characters, were they to make any such declaration.

The Right Hon. Gentleman, and those who argued on the same side with him, had contended, that in this, and other measures of Government, there appeared a strong imitation of the French system of procedure; upon what grounds they knew best; hitherto they had never taken the trouble of explaining them to the House. Wherein was the comparison to be found? He begged Gentlemen to attend a little to the comparative state of the two countries. Here a case had been stated, and clearly made out, proving that there was a party in this country, whose avowed system aimed at the destruction of all civilized order, the annihilation of Parliament, and the subversion of the constitution itself, by the introduction of Jacobinism, which had already proved so fatal to France, and at that moment threatened the dissolution of every established government in Europe! Such being the case in this country, it was proposed to prevent the calamitous effects of this dangerous conspiracy, by the adoption of a legal measure, limited in its duration, and which the experience and wisdom of our ancestors had approved, and found highly beneficial. What then was to be compared to this in the situation of France, under the influence of the present ruling power in that country, *miscalled* a government? a power which, to support its reprobated, detestable, and presumptuous usurpation, had recourse to every stratagem that fraud, robbery, and injustice could suggest. It was therefore unfair to impose any such comparisons upon that House; for, in the present instance, we were doing no more than resisting French crimes, by opposing to them French principles; and between them it would not be said, there could be found the least comparison, analogy, or imitation. The Right Hon. Gentleman had next proceeded, in the climax of his imagination, to augur consequences the most portentous, ominous, and inauspicious, from the arguments of the Right Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Windham) who sat near him; and, taking that to be the first step of the ladder which he supposed reared for the destruction

tion of the constitution, seemed dreadfully afraid about the extent to which that reasoning might be carried; and on that point he had produced somewhat of an extraordinary kind of argument, which was, that because all the measures which had yet been taken had proved ineffectual to check the progress of the evil they had been applied to remedy, Gentlemen were not to persevere in endeavouring to overcome the evil by the application of means stronger and more efficacious. Here it might be asked, if those measures had not been adopted, and the vigilance of Government exerted, whether those evils would now have been greater than they were? and whether, if no such steps had been taken during the last two years, we should not have enjoyed the same tranquillity that had prevailed during that period? The fact was, if these measures had not been adopted, they should have been hurried much faster to the same scenes of mischief which were opened to their view, and from the dreadful consequences of which they had been saved by the vigilance of Parliament and the exertions of Government, assisted by the prevailing opinions of the country. He next proceeded to say, that if they dreaded all that their alarms suggested, and had found that the measures adopted last year had not succeeded in checking those parties, they ought not to persevere in measures of severity, when there was reason to think such measures had been of little avail, and that measures of a more cool and moderate nature would be more likely to be attended with success: But to what did that Right Hon. Gentleman propose to apply those mild and moderate remedies? Did he suppose that the progress of a Jacobin Convention, were it to be once established in this country, was to be stopped, or its consequences avoided, by indulgence and concession? or that indulgence and concession were fit to be opposed to so daring an attempt upon the existence of the constitution? He might wish to preserve the British constitution, but that would be a thing impossible, if these Societies met with indulgence or concession. Their own language clearly expressed, that they would make no compromise; and it must be clear that no concession would satisfy them short of a surrender of the British constitution. It must therefore appear that resistance, and the strongest resistance that could be made, was absolutely necessary, notwithstanding all that had been augured in so prophetic a strain against the adoption of severe measures, even in extreme cases. The Right Hon. Gentleman had said, if there were such persons, to be sure they could not like them; but let them not imagine that persecution would get the better of their opinions, whatever they might be. If such toleration of opinions ought to be

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be granted to persons of the description which the members of those Societies proved to be, to what did it amount? It amounted to a toleration of the worst species of anarchy, sedition, and treason. In his idea of persecuting for political opinions, the Right Hon. Gentleman need not suppose that there was any particular intention, by that Bill, to go too great a length in that way; and, once for all, to answer the question of "where are you to stop?" that it was not proper that the limit of their remedies should be ever declared, or that they should pronounce that this was the last remedy to which they would have recourse; he would at the same time say, that prosecution, in no instance, ought to extend beyond what the real necessity of the case required; and the temporary means proposed by the present Bill might be supposed the best remedy in the present case.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, he should next come to those points on which the Right Hon. Gentleman seemed to have argued at a much greater length than he thought necessary, *viz.* the degree of necessity that existed, the proofs of that necessity, and the nature of the remedy applied to the case. Upon these several points, he conceived, the House was already perfectly satisfied; and he could see no reason why the Right Hon. Gentleman should have introduced into that part of his speech, so much in favour of the right which the people had to meet for legal purposes in a constitutional way, or their right to petition Parliament for a reform in the Representation, because these were points which had never been disputed, and had no connexion whatever with the question before the House. With regard to the policy of such an application to Parliament, when that question came regularly before the House last year, he had fully declared his sentiments on that subject, and on a Parliamentary Reform, and his opinions still remained the same: But surely no person would presume to say, that there existed the most remote analogy between legal Societies for obtaining Reform in Parliament, with an intention and desire legally and constitutionally to improve the Representation, and that Convention proposed by the Jacobin Societies, whose object was the destruction of Parliament, and not its improvement. That that was their design, was clearly proved by the authority of their own records: The bulk of them did not even pretend that Reform was either their view or their wish; such a measure was neither in their mouths, nor in their minds; neither did their actions in any sort correspond with the actions of men who wished well to their country. To give any sanction to them, under the impression that their object was a legal and constitutional Reform,

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was too ridiculous an idea to admit even of a moment's consideration: As well might they talk of giving their sanction to legal conspiracy and legal assassination, as imagine that those Societies had any legal or virtuous purpose whatever in their system! [To corroborate this argument the Chancellor of the Exchequer read various Extracts from the Proceedings of the Society for Constitutional Information, and the London Corresponding Society.] These Societies were, he said, the main springs of this destructive system, which called aloud for such immediate and such powerful resistance. What he had read from their own books, proved sufficiently, in his mind, that it was through hypocrisy they pretended their object was a Parliamentary Reform, and that they used it merely as a pretext or mask for their real and mischievous designs; and the papers inserted in their Report were, in his opinion, a full and complete answer to such Gentlemen as endeavoured to confound those men with Parliamentary Reformers, and also to refute the charge made by those who had insisted that the Report contained no new matter whatever. In one of their proceedings they appointed a Committee for the express purpose of watching over the conduct of Parliament, with a view to controul any proceeding which might appear to them improper; and that they were to effect through the organ of a Convention, expressing at the same time, that as no redress of grievances could be expected from that quarter, it became their duty to repel tyranny by the same means by which it was supported. On that point he could not but express his surprise at hearing the same arguments used by that Right Hon. Gentleman which had been used on a former night, respecting the right which existed in the people at large to watch over the proceedings of Parliament, and to interfere when any measure was going forward which they might conceive inimical to their interests. What most astonished him was, that any argument of that sort should be offered as a palliation for the conduct of that Society; since, after the union with the other in the same system, and for the same objects, they avowedly came to resolutions, that they should not appeal to Parliament for redress of their supposed grievances, but were to proceed to acts of authority and controul over the functions of Parliament.

With regard to nothing new being contained in the Report, it was in itself a matter of indifference, whether the information contained in it was old or new, provided it was considered to substantiate the grounds upon which the alarm had taken place. However, in point of fact, they were not old proofs which it contained; for, until the seizure of the pa-

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pers, the correspondence with the Club at Norwich was never known; and that was one of the most important discoveries these papers contained, as it had brought to light the general design of assembling their Jacobin Convention. As to what was known two years ago, could any person say that these transactions were unconnected with the subsequent and progressive proceedings of those Societies and that they did not form a very material link of that chain of conduct which it was necessary to trace from its first commencement down to the present moment? One part of the Report, however, the Right Hon. Gentleman had admitted to be new, that which stated that these Societies were preparing to put arms into the hands of those who were to carry their designs into execution. That article of the Report had been somewhat curiously objected to, that not being in the body of the Report, but given as a separate article, it was therefore less authentic. In answer to that, he should mention, that that piece of information was cautiously given, because the Committee, at the time their Report was made up, had not been able to make so full an inquiry into that matter as the importance of the subject demanded: They, however, were now convinced, that they would very soon be in possession of such information as might lead them to propose to Parliament some further measures on that article. Another reason they had for making it a separate article, was, that the full information contained in the Report respecting the intended Convention, was in their minds sufficient to warrant the proceedings intended to be founded thereon.

As to the propriety of the remedy, without again recurring to the arguments used against persecution for matters of opinion, he would shortly say, the remedy amounted to nothing else than putting a legal restraint upon criminal actions: And the present crime amounted, in his opinion, to a conspiracy of that nature, which was an equal, if not a stronger, reason for the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act, than either the cases of invasion or rebellion, to which Gentlemen had so frequently alluded. It was, however, something extraordinary, that the Right Hon. Gentleman should have ascribed the success of the Christian religion to the effect of human action, and not to the divinity of its institution; and expressed, at the same time, his apprehensions that the principles of Jacobinism would in the same manner be established by the spirit of persecution. He would readily admit that Jacobinism was not more likely to succeed by the aid of its divinity, than the pure religion of Christ; but he was quite at a loss to see how the Hon. Gentleman's argument could at all apply. The Right Hon. Gentleman

tleman seemed very much to doubt the good effects of that Bill, and that it would never attain the object for which it was intended; the opinion of the persons who composed those Societies seemed to differ essentially from his, and they considered it in a different point of view; for they had declared the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus Act* the very measure which should be the signal for them to assemble their Convention; and on that account it became the more necessary for Parliament to pass the Bill quickly, to prevent them from taking measures to evade its operation.

With regard to this measure being likely to invite the French to invade us, the Right Hon. Gentleman had spoken nobly and boldly, when he said, that he did not fear an invasion, but would not invite one; and in that sentiment he perfectly concurred; but the material difference between them was, that he believed the effect on the French would be quite the reverse from what he supposed, for certainly, the suppression of our enemies at home would be no very welcome intelligence to our enemies abroad. But however that might be, he thought it but right, with regard to the disaffected persons in this country; whatever their numbers were, it was proper the vigilant exertions of Government should equal their activity.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer concluded with an apology to the House for having detained them so much longer than was his first intention.

Mr. Fox in explanation declared, that with regard to what he had said on the subject of the Christian religion, the Right Hon. Gentleman had entirely misunderstood and mistated him, which he did not conceive possible, as he had taken particular pains to make his meaning clear and obvious. What he said was, that the Christian religion owed much of its success to persecution; not insinuating from that, that it was deficient in point of divinity; it was a religion of which he always had been accustomed to speak with reverence, and which he had ever professed; and further, to elucidate that point, he observed, that not only the Christian religion, but other sects, which had no just claim to divine institution, had flourished under persecution. He repeated his assertion as to the right of the people, and their propriety in keeping a proper degree of vigilance over the proceedings of Parliament, and their right to associate for legal purposes. If (he said) such a Bill as had that night been alluded to by his Hon. Friend (*Mr. Windham*), or one for assimilating the laws of this country to those of Scotland, should be brought in, he should think it his duty to associate with delegates from the different towns and counties

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counties of England, and to resist it by every constitutional means. With regard to the effect of that Bill on the opinions of the French, he remained in the same sentiments; no country was without disaffected persons; but that Bill held out to our enemies, that they were so numerous here, that it required the strongest efforts of the Executive Government to restrain them from open rebellion.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer declared himself perfectly satisfied with the explanation, and assured the Right Honourable Gentleman that what he had said arose from misconception.

Mr. Thompson said, he rose not to justify any of the Societies. If they were criminal, let punishment fall where there was guilt. He wished only to explain the correspondence alluded to in the Report of the Secret Committee, between the Corresponding Society, and the Society for Constitutional Information, of which he was a member. The Society for Constitutional Information would not agree to the use of the word Convention, which they thought might give a false impression of their intentions, and on the Friday following they resolved that they would not send delegates to any meeting. Why was not this resolution mentioned in the Report? No circular letter had been sent to other Societies by the Society for Constitutional Information; and he asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as a member of the Secret Committee, whether he did not recollect having seen the resolution above mentioned in the Books. If he had not, it must have been omitted by the Secretary either through negligence or design.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer admitted that no circular letters had been sent by the Society for Constitutional Information. The books of the Society appeared to be kept with the utmost regularity in point of form. He did not recollect whether or not they contained any such resolution as the Hon. Gentlemen had stated, and wished him to mention the date.

Mr. Thompson said, he did not recollect the date, but was certain as to the fact; and if the resolution did not appear on the books, the Secretary must have suppressed it.

Mr. Grey said, this was a new fact to prove the whole Report of the Secret Committee a scandalous imposture. A Member of the House had stated a resolution to which he himself was a witness. Could the Chancellor of the Exchequer deny that it was upon the books? To say that he did not know was to say that the Committee had reported to the House on the contents of papers which they themselves had not examined.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, he should give no answer to a question put in such a tone.

Mr. Curwen observed on the rashness with which the House was proceeding, without ascertaining facts. He had quitted the Society of the Friends of the People on no suspicion that the gentlemen who remained in it would suffer themselves to be misled, and was still the advocate of Parliamentary Reform.

Major Maitland said, the arguments for the Bill, as far as they depended on the conduct of one of the Societies, were now admitted to be false; and the Report of the Secret Committee was contradicted on a point of fact by the only Member of the House who could speak to it of his own knowledge.

Mr. Jekyll contended that the House had been hitherto completely misled, and was going to vote away all that was left to distinguish it from a despotic government, upon erroneous statements. After the information afforded by *Mr. Thompson*, and which there was no attempt to disprove on the other side of the House, he had a right to assume that the papers contained in the Report, were not those that belonged to the Constitutional Society; that their Secretary, or some other person, had been bribed to substitute false papers instead of those that were genuine; and that the whole was a forgery and imposture of the same kind, and with no better object than those of *Titus Oates*. In order to gain time for making the necessary inquiry, he moved "That the debate be adjourned."

On this, the House divided;

<i>Ayes</i>	33
<i>Noes</i>	183

Majority against the Adjournment 150*

After

* The following is a List of the Minority who voted for the Adjournment, to prevent the third Reading of the Bill to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act.

<i>Fox, R. H. C. J.</i>	<i>Spencer, Lord Robert</i>
<i>Maitland, Hon. T.</i>	<i>Byng, George</i>
<i>Howard, Henry</i>	<i>Curwen, J. C.</i>
<i>Hussey, William</i>	<i>Rawdon, Hon. John</i>
<i>Jekyll, Joseph</i>	<i>Aubrey, Sir John</i>
<i>Baring, Sir Francis</i>	<i>Church, J. B.</i>
<i>Wycombe, Earl</i>	<i>Western, C. C.</i>
<i>Harrison, John</i>	<i>Thompson, Thomas</i>
<i>North, Dudley</i>	<i>Bouverie, Edward</i>
<i>Sturt, Charles</i>	<i>Vynor, R.</i>

Antonie,

After the division on the question of adjournment moved by Mr. Jekyll, an altercation took place on the re-admission of strangers.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer insisted in the most peremptory terms, on the doors being kept shut.

The discussion on the misrepresentation of the proceedings in the Society for Constitutional Information, as stated by Mr. Thompson, was revived. It was said, in strong terms, that the Secret Committee had falsified or misquoted the books of the Society.

Lord Mulgrave and Mr. Jenkinson returned from a re-examination of the books.

Mr. Sheridan, *Mr. Curwen*, and *Major Maitland*, contended that from the statement of the Members of the Secret Committee, there was an acknowledged error or imposition in their Report.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer confessed that there was a mistake, but denied that it was intentional, or of sufficient consequence to justify postponing the passing of the Bill.

Mr. Windham, with great warmth, defended the Secret Committee.

Mr. Grey justified his former expressions, in his question to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and retorted with great severity.

He was called to order by General Smith, and the Speaker interposed.

Mr. Fox insisted that the detection of this error, if error it must be called, was a new proof that the Report of the Secret Committee was founded on imposture.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer made use of some warm expressions; which *Mr. Fox* repelled with an equal degree of warmth.

After a debate of the greatest heat that perhaps ever occurred in a House of Commons, during which the Speaker conducted

Antonie, Lee	Fletcher, Sir H.
Lambton, Henry	Fitzpatrick, General
Tarleton, Colonel	Erskine, Hon. Thos.
Courtenay, John	Milbanke, Ralph
Burch, J. K.	Hare, James
St. John, St. Andrew	Francis, Philip
Taylor, M. A.	Russell, Lord William
Milnes, R. S.	Jervoise, C. J.
Winnington, Sir Ed.	

TELLERS.

Sheridan, R. B. Grey, Charles

Additional Members who voted on the second Division on the Adjournment the same Day.

Cavendish, Lord G. H. Smith, William
Wharton, John Howell, David

himself

himself with the utmost candour and propriety, the question was put on the motion that the Bill do pass:

<i>Ayes</i>	146
<i>Noes</i>	28

Majority 118

The Bill was then ordered to the Lords for their concurrence.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer then moved an Address of Thanks for his Majesty's Message; and that a copy of the Report of the Secret Committee be sent to the Lords.

Mr. Sheridan moved that the Report be printed*, which, after some conversation, was agreed to.

Adjourned at 3 o'clock on Sunday morning.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY, May 19.

Received from the Commons, the Bill to empower his Majesty to secure and detain such persons as he shall suspect, &c. and also the Report of the Committee of the House of Commons on the Papers of the Society for Constitutional Information, and the London Corresponding Society, &c.

Lord Grenville said, before he proceeded to the business expected to engage the attention of the House that day, he would just mention, that in consequence of the importance of the news received that day, by which it appeared that the brave officers by sea and land in the West Indies had completed their glorious enterprises in that quarter of the globe, he should take the opportunity to move for that reward which was most satisfactory to British officers, viz. the applause of the Legislature on the first open day to Sir Charles Grey, Bart. and Sir John Jervis, and to the officers and soldiers employed in the late glorious conquests.

With regard to the special business of the day, he should move that the Report of the Secret Committee of the House of Commons be referred to the Secret Committee of their Lordships.

Earl Stanhope rose to give his negative to the motion. His Lordship contended, that the papers in the bag were known as to their contents, and that as it was notorious that the facts stated in the Report were to be found in those papers, they might as well be referred to an open Committee in the House, as to a secret Committee in a private chamber. The Earl

* For a copy of the printed Report, see the Appendix, p. 33.

stated the detection of an imposition respecting some leaves produced elsewhere *, and stated to be leaves that had been torn out of a book produced as evidence. His Lordship said, he had held them to the light, and perceived that there were no holes through them, which would have been the case had they ever been bound, and made part of a volume. They had, however, been brought up to that House as part of evidence, and in the night some person or other cut the backs of the sheets to give them the appearance of having been bound; but it was done in so awkward and bungling a manner, that they were not cut in the right place, and it was clear they could not have been bound. It came out afterwards, upon confession, that they never had been part of the original book produced. There were various other reasons, his Lordship said, for an open Committee in the House, and not the least important was, that the book laid upon the table, with the papers and the Report, was the record or register of the resolutions of one of the Societies, who well knew its contents, as it was their own book. His Lordship said, having come down to the House before their Lordships were assembled, and having nothing to do, he went to the House of Commons, and was present when the Report was first brought down and read, and he there found that the Report was a mere humbug, the mere shadow of the papers it referred to, or rather scarcely a semblance of a shadow. It varied materially from the papers on which it was pretended to be founded, and an Hon. and independent Member of another Assembly had complained, that a particular and material resolution entered in the book of the Society in question was passed over, and not the smallest notice taken of it in the Report. As he had before stated, therefore, the Report was a mere humbug, and for that reason the Report and the papers ought to be examined in the House, that the variations might be traced and detected. There was a good reason, his Lordship said, why the papers referred to the House of Commons, in consequence of his Majesty's Message, should be there sent to a Secret Committee for examination, because at that time their contents were unknown to the House. That was not the case with their Lordships; the papers and the Report had been laid on the table, and their Lordships might have inspected that and the papers; they might also, if they had chosen it, have gone to the House of Commons, and known as much as he did. His Lordship enlarged on the omitted resolution, and concluded with repeating, that he should give his negative to the motion, not

* In Westminster Hall, on the Trial of Warren Hastings, Esq.

in order to prevent inquiry, or put a stop to investigation, but in order to make way for a motion to refer the Report and the papers to the examination of the House itself.

In the course of his speech he said, he had read most of the papers in the bag, and referred to in the Report, either separately or in the newspapers, as many of them were two years old.

The Earl of Lauderdale said, though he was sorry to differ from his Noble Friend, yet, whatever he might suspect about the correctness of the Report, whatever information he might have heard, or whatever he might have learnt without doors upon the subject, he did not think that the fit moment to make any comment upon it. He was of opinion that the course proposed by the Noble Secretary of State was the proper course to take, viz. to refer the Report and the papers to a Secret Committee of their own, and when they made a report upon it, it would be time enough to see if there were any material variations or not between the original papers and the Report of the Committee of the House of Commons. With regard to the other notice given by the Noble Secretary of State, viz. of his intention to move the thanks of the House to those brave and skilful officers Sir Charles Grey and Sir John Jervis, for their distinguished conduct and gallant services, he was heartily glad that such an intention had been signified. It was not only a tribute due to singular merit, but would convince our enemies abroad, as well as our armies, that the Government at home were attentive to the services of their officers, and ready to claim the reward of their country in their behalf whenever it was deserved, and in the instance in question no man could deny that the praise of their country had been highly merited.

The Marquis of Lansdown said, he was not in the House when the Noble Secretary of State rose, and signified his intentions; but he had heard incidentally that the Noble Lord had stated two motions, both of which met his opinion completely. He was sincerely glad, come from what quarter it might, that delay was proposed respecting a Bill, which almost went to the annihilation of the constitution itself—that constitution, which had been echoed through every corner of the kingdom as the envy of the world, and the object of universal reverence, as he had hoped with sincerity, but of late he had reason greatly to doubt that sincerity, when he saw the people suffer, without complaint, such measures as had lately been witnessed. He never, his Lordship said, had come down to the House with greater apprehension than that day, when he had come to the House under the expectation that

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that he was to be called upon to vote so serious and so important a Bill a first, a second, and a third time in one day; he repeated it therefore, that he cared not from what quarter the delay came, he was sincerely glad they were to be allowed time for calm consideration, and was willing to give a welcome reception to repentance, let it have proceeded from what motive it would.

With regard to the other notice of the Noble Secretary of State, *viz.* of a motion for the thanks of that House to those gallant officers Sir Charles Grey and Sir John Jervis, he was glad that it had been brought forward; it was a tribute they were highly entitled to; and although he was proud of having passed his life in habits of the greatest intimacy with those brave men, he could not be said to be partial in his praise of their merits, when he took that opportunity of speaking of it, which ministers themselves had chosen as the fit one for their eulogy.

The motion for a reference of the Report and papers to a Secret Committee of nine Lords was then put.

Earl Stanhope was the single *Not Content*.

Lord Grenville made the other necessary motions; among others, that the Committee be balloted for the next day, before the Lords went into the Hall.

Earl Stanhope complained, that the Noble Secretary of State, from some defect of voice, and the Noble Lord on the Woolsack, spoke so low, that he could not hear the motions.

Lord Grenville and the Lord Chancellor therefore spoke louder, upon the motion next made.

Just as the question of adjournment was about to be put,

The Duke of Grafton rose, and observed, that in all his Parliamentary experience he never remembered a Message being brought down from his Majesty, without an humble Address of Thanks to his Majesty for his most gracious Message being voted immediately. He knew not to what cause that custom had been departed from in respect to the Message from the King, delivered on Saturday; perhaps ministers had their reasons for it, but the omission appeared to him so extraordinary, that he thought it ought to be remedied by an immediate motion for an Address. He should be rather glad if it came from ministers; but if not moved by them, he should feel it his duty to move it himself.

Lord Grenville said, he hoped the Noble Duke did not impute what he termed an omission to have arisen from any neglect of attention or respect to his Majesty on his part. No man would wish more sincerely than he did to avoid the appearance of either the one or the other. In fact, he thought

the moving an Address to be a matter unimportant in point of time, and that it would be better to move it after they had examined by their Committee the papers in question, and knew upon what to ground their thanks. If, however, any one Noble Lord thought it more proper to move the Address to his Majesty without that delay, he would move it immediately.

The Duke of Grafton repeated it, that in the course of his Parliamentary experience, he did not recollect a single instance in which it had been omitted to return an immediate Address of Thanks in the first instance on receiving and reading a Message from the King.

The Earl of Lauderdale said, he inferred from what had fallen from the Noble Secretary of State, that if the Commons had not favoured the House by sending up the Report of their Secret Committee on the papers, the Noble Secretary would have himself advised his Majesty to refer the papers that constituted the ground of the Report to the House, being aware that they ought to see them before they proceeded with the Bill brought up from the other House.

Lord Grenville then moved an Address of Thanks to his Majesty :

Which was carried *nemine dissentiente*.

Lord Grenville next moved, That their Lordships, being desirous of keeping up the good understanding subsisting between both Houses of Parliament, would return the papers to the Commons when they should be wanted; and that a Message be sent to inform the Commons of the same.

Both of which motions were carried.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, May 19.

John Smith, Esq. for Pontefract, and the Hon. *Robert Stewart*, for Tregony, took their oaths and their seats.

The Election Oaths Bill was read a third time, and passed.

SEDITIONOUS AND TREASONABLE PAPERS.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer moved, That the Books and Papers which had been laid before the House by Mr. Secretary Dundas, and the Report of the Secret Committee thereon, should be sent to the House of Peers.

This motion was agreed to; and *Mr. Windham* was appointed to carry the same to the Lords.

THANKS

THANKS OF THE HOUSE TO SIR CHARLES GREY AND SIR JOHN JERVIS.

Mr. Secretary Dundas said, he should on some future day move the thanks of the House to Sir Charles Grey and Sir John Jervis, and all the officers and men under their command, for their eminent services in the West Indies. As he was upon his legs, he wished to know of an Hon. Gentleman opposite to him (*Mr. Sheridan*) whether he intended to bring forward the motion he had given notice of, that day? If he did, and the matter was likely to proceed to much length, he should be under the necessity of moving an adjournment of the House, for it was not in his power to attend that day.

Mr. Sheridan replied, that his motion would not be very long; and he trusted it would not require much discussion, for he had hopes the Right Hon. Gentleman would agree to it; at the same time, as the Right Hon. Gentleman could not attend that day, he should defer it.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, May 20.

The Lords proceeded to ballot for a Secret Committee of Nine, and the following Noble Peers were chosen:

The Lord Chancellor,	Earl of Carlisle,
Lord Privy Seal,	Earl of Caernarvon,
Duke of Leeds,	Earl of Chatham,
Duke of Portland,	Earl of Mansfield.
Earl of Hardwicke,	

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, May 20.

Mr. Windham reported at the Bar, that he had delivered in the House of Lords, the books and papers of certain Societies, together with the Report of the Committee of Secrecy, as ordered by the House.

A Message from the Lords informed the House, that their Lordships, being desirous at all times to keep up a good understanding and correspondence with the House of Commons, which was never more necessary than at present, had received from the Commons certain books and papers, which they would examine and faithfully return.

Mr. Sheridan observed, that the first part of this Message appeared to be a little extraordinary. He did not know what reply the Message of the House of Commons required. It

seemed to convey but little information, in stating that the Lords had received certain papers, and would return them, and that they were desirous of keeping up a good understanding and correspondence with that House. He could not help saying, it appeared to him to be somewhat singular, that a Bill, which was thought by another assembly to require delay, should have been hurried through the House of Commons with such indecent precipitancy. The conversation was pursued no farther.

THANKS TO SIR CHARLES GREY AND SIR JOHN JERVIS.

Mr. Secretary Dundas changed the subject by rising to take notice of our West India possessions. He adverted to the state they were in at the conclusion of the last peace, and observed, that the advantage of our late acquisitions must be very great in a commercial as well as in various other points of view; the whole of the sugar trade of the world would soon, he expected, be in our hands: For much of that advantage, under the will of Heaven, we were indebted to the glorious exertions of Sir Charles Grey and Sir John Jervis, and the officers and men under their command, to all of whom he paid the warmest compliments for their patriotism, their exertions, and their courage. He begged to take to himself no other share in the merit, than that of having had the good fortune to select and recommend to his Majesty's service, men who had gained to their country such signal advantages, and to themselves immortal honour. Having specified the merits of the officers and men, he concluded with moving, "That the Thanks of the House be given to Sir Charles Grey, Knight of the Bath, for his noble, gallant, and meritorious conduct in the West Indies. The same to Sir John Jervis; and also to all the officers under the command of both, to be transmitted to them from the Speaker of that House. The approbation also of the House of the conduct of all the non-commissioned officers; also of all the men employed; to be transmitted to them by their different captains."

Mr. Sheridan did not oppose, but highly applauded these motions; he remarked, however, that the Secretary of State, at the time he bestowed on these gallant commanders, officers, and men, laurels which they so well merited, took care to reserve to himself a pretty bushy twig of the tree, at the very moment he would seem to decline accepting it. He had hinted also at the advantage we had gained since the conclusion of the peace, seeming to insinuate that the peace was improvidently concluded. He should have been a little more tender on his own connexions; for a Right Hon. Friend of his was in administration at the conclusion of that peace. He thought, therefore, that those extraneous topics might have been spared. He knew

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knew not with what view they were introduced, unless by a way of a set-off to what had perhaps happened in the Mediterranean. Having said this, he must again repeat that he approved highly of all the motions themselves, and the more so, as they included the common men, who had as much claim to our approbation as their superiors in station. He felt himself not a little pleased in reflecting, that most of the common sailors in that affair were Irishmen; they had behaved bravely, and excited our admiration; and that, he hoped, proved there was no danger to the public cause, in putting arms in the hands of Roman Catholics.

Mr. Secretary Dundas declared, that he did not, in any thing he had said, mean to detract from the merit of any of the officers or men.

Mr. Sheridan admitted that he had not so detracted; he only seemed a little eager to share the laurels; and, by an allusion to the former peace, and that we had gained great advantages since, he might possibly convey to our allies in this war an idea, that they too might have some interested motives, independent of the great, good, and glorious common cause of restoring to the world order, morality, and religion.

Major Maitland suggested the propriety of sending to all inferior officers the thanks of the House by the Speaker, instead of making any distinction; for which he quoted instances.

Mr. Secretary Dundas said, that the distinction was not intended to convey any difference of esteem, with regard to any of the parties, but was merely in compliance with form. Had the officers acted separately, the thanks would have been as the Hon. Gentleman mentioned, but that was the regular form when they acted together.

The motions were put, and carried *nem. con.*

The Bill for the better regulating of Dover Harbour was read a third time, and passed.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, May 21.

The first part of the Report * of their Lordships' Secret Committee, on the papers communicated by the Commons, having been presented by the Lord Privy Seal, a short conversation ensued.

The Marquis of Stafford, Chairman of the Committee, asked for further powers for the Committee, in consequence of information transmitted to them, stating the grounds on which

* For a printed copy of the Report, see the Appendix to this volume.

he made the requisition, *viz.* That they might be instructed to obtain such further information as might be communicated to them by his Majesty's Secretaries of State, their original powers being limited to the papers referred to their examination.

The Earl of Derby observed, that the Lord Privy Seal, as Chairman of the Secret Committee, ought not to have delivered any verbal report which could not be put upon the Journals, and that the only way to make it regular was to make it his own, and move something upon it.

The Earl of Caernarvon said, that the Noble Earl had entirely mistaken the communication made by the Noble Marquis (Stafford), who was directed by the Committee to inform the House of a circumstance, which, not being referred to them, they could not report any thing upon. No report verbal or written was made of the matter which that circumstance might have furnished. He said, that the motion which naturally followed from the verbal communication, was for further power; but as that was proposed by the Report, it appeared the most regular and proper way to make that proposition tomorrow, when the Report was to be considered; but if the Noble Earl wished it to be made at present, as grounded on the Chairman's verbal communication, it was a point not worth objecting to.

Lord Grenville moved, That the Report be taken into consideration on the 22d, and that the Lords be summoned.

The Earl of Lauderdale coming into the House after the resolution was passed, complained of it as irregular, and assigned his reasons for objecting to the Report.

The Earl of Caernarvon said, that the thing was perfectly regular; but, if it was not, it was done to put an end to a difficulty in a Noble Earl's (Lord Derby's) mind: That the Noble Earl's (Lauderdale's) observations arose from not knowing the state of the proceedings; that he had neither heard the Report of the Committee read, nor read it himself; or he would have seen that the Committee have received no information in the sense in which he construed the word in the motion just made, nor reported any matter on such information. If he had read the Report he would have seen that the Committee agreed with him so entirely, that they could not take any thing into consideration as a Committee, but what was referred to them! That having received information, or, if the Noble Lord liked the phrase better, had information tendered to them, which related to the matter before them, they stated to the House, in their Report, that they had no such powers to deliberate and report upon the matter which had come to their knowledge, and therefore desired larger powers.

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powers. The Chairman could not avoid both receiving and reading any letter sent to him; but that did not imply the entertaining it as a subject of deliberation. If a murder had been committed in the Committee, the Chairman would have reported it verbally to the House, though not referred to them. The business was quite regular; for not only the Chairman, but any Noble Lord who had heard a fact which had any relation to the matter which the House had referred to the Committee, might, if he thought fit, have moved that it should be referred to the Committee; or, that further powers might be given, which would comprehend that species of information.

Lord Grenville's motion was agreed to, and the House adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, *May 21.*

A message was received from the Lords, that they would proceed farther in the trial of Warren Hastings, Esq. the 23d. Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THURSDAY, *May 22.*

REPORT OF THE SECRET COMMITTEE.

Lord Grenville moved the Order of the Day.

The Report of the Secret Committee, printed and sent up to their Lordships from the House of Commons, by order of the House, was read by the Clerk at the table; after which,

Lord Grenville moved, That the Report of the Committee of Nine of their Lordships be read, which was likewise done. It stated, that the Committee of their Lordships had met, had compared the Report of the Committee of the House of Commons with the papers which were sent with it, and had come to a resolution, that they were satisfied, from looking at those papers, that a treasonable conspiracy had been formed and acted upon in pursuance thereof, in different parts of the kingdom, for the express purpose of superseding the functions and authority of Parliament, for the subversion of the established laws and constitution of the kingdom, and for the introduction of that anarchy and confusion which so fatally prevailed in France: That measures have been taken for providing arms, of the most pernicious sort, for various persons, for carrying on the purposes for which they have conspired. The Committee had directed a further examination into these

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circumstances, and they submitted whether it would be proper that they should peruse these books and papers further immediately, by a Committee of Secrecy, or leave it to the zeal of their Lordships to come to an immediate measure, in order to avert the calamities in which the further progress of such a conspiracy might involve the nation.

The Earl of Lauderdale spoke to order. His Lordship said, he had some doubts as to the order of their Lordships' proceedings; how far this Report was correct and regular, and such as they could properly receive. The Report merely stated an opinion of the Committee on certain points; but it did not contain any facts on which they grounded their opinion, nor did any thing appear on the face of the Report of their Lordships' Committee, that could furnish their Lordships with that ample and satisfactory information which the House had a right to expect from a Committee entrusted with such a variety of papers, and vested with such extensive powers, as that Committee possessed. The papers brought up by the Commons were to be returned, and their Lordships could have recourse to them. He must maintain that their Lordships' Committee had no power to report their own dry opinion to the House; they should have related facts, and have left the House to form its own opinion upon those facts.

The Bishop of Rochester hinted that this was not speaking to order.

The Earl of Lauderdale said, if the Learned Prelate thought he could put him out by such an interruption, he was mistaken; he was not to be discomposed by the muttering of any man in that House: He believed that he was speaking strictly in order, because he was stating that the Report which their Lordships had just heard read, was an irregular Report; and he believed it would require at least all the eloquence of the Learned Prelate, to prove that he was out of order, or that the Report was regular, and such as the Committee was charged to make. He would say again, that the Committee should have reported facts to the House, and not merely their dry opinion on facts. The order by which the Committee was constituted, was not expressed, as in some cases, "That they should report the same, *together with their opinion thereon*, to the House;" but that they should compare the Report of the Secret Committee of the House of Commons, and the papers referred to them, and report thereupon.

The Bishop of Rochester spoke to order: He said that the Report of the Committee was regularly before the House; since it was made, the House had founded proceedings upon it, and voted several resolutions; it was, therefore, out of order

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order to object to the Report. His Lordship desired that the entries on the Journals might be read; which having been done,

The Earl of Lauderdale said, he was perfectly convinced he was in order, this was the very stage for him to make his objection; having made it, he left it to their Lordships to judge of it, and for them to see whether they would be guilty of such a disrespect to themselves, as to proceed in a manner for which there was no precedent on their Journals. The Noble Secretary of State would have been regular, if he had moved, "That this Report be re-considered." His Lordship said that he was not in the House the preceding day, when the Report was brought up. Even if he had, he should have reserved his sentiments to the proper season, which he deemed the present, when it was about to be taken into consideration. His objections applied to the construction of the Report, the implicit adoption of the comments and sentiments of the Committee of the other House, and also the insertion of sentences which were founded on suspicion, conjecture, and surmise. His Lordship therefore wished a revise of the whole proceedings; and he must again say, let who would attempt to refute him, that this Report was not such as the Committee were empowered by the House to make; it should have related facts, but it contained nothing but matter of dry opinion.

Lord Grenville began a very able speech, which, from its nature, was elaborate, with declaring, that he had rather have suffered the Noble Earl who had just sat down, to proceed as far as he pleased on the point of order in this case, than interrupt him, because he was persuaded that points of that kind had better be allowed to pass by, than to be strenuously contended: He said this merely with reference to the general convenience of the House, and not from any conviction that the Noble Earl was right on the question of order; on the contrary, he was convinced the Report was strictly regular; not only so, but he was clearly of opinion that the Committee had discharged their duty in an able manner, and that they had reported an opinion on these papers, in which he trusted their Lordships would coincide. He would proceed, however, to that which appeared to him to be the most important matter for their Lordships' consideration. He rose in consequence of what their Lordships had first heard read, and of the notice he gave the preceding day, to call on them to consider whether they ought not, without further delay, to proceed with all possible expedition in the measure before them, which was a Bill brought up to them from the House of Commons, to enable his Majesty to secure and detain such persons as he

shall suspect to be conspiring against his person and government. It had been communicated to their Lordships, first by the message from the King; secondly, from the House of Commons; and, lastly, by a Committee of their own; that there was a dangerous conspiracy, a treasonable and alarming conspiracy, formed for the subversion of the laws, constitution, and government of the country. It was moreover ascertained, he trusted, to the satisfaction of their Lordships, that arms had been furnished, to carry into effect the wicked machinations of the Societies to which the Report adverted. In such a situation, the two branches of the Legislature had shewn precedents, where the hands of the Executive Government were strengthened for the purpose of defeating those who conspired against the laws and the constitution. Was he to close his speech here, he was convinced, after their Lordships had heard the Report, that it were unnecessary for him to say more to induce them to agree to the motion which he would have the honour of submitting to their consideration. The sole question, in his mind, was, whether their Lordships would agree to a measure that tended to enable the Executive Government to secure to this country the blessings of the constitution and its laws, which were attacked; for that purpose, he would recommend to their Lordships to pass the Bill before them; in doing which, they were doing nothing more than their ancestors did, and that at the best periods of our constitution, at an æra when liberty was best understood and practically defined. At the time of the glorious Revolution itself, that House had adopted the measure now proposed on slighter examination than that which had been the foundation; this would be apparent to their Lordships on reference to their Journals; it would appear that such a Bill as this had passed on a simple communication from the Crown, without stating any thing but a mere fact of there being a conspiracy, and without waiting for any proof it; but although that was the case, he felt in this instance a desire to enter a little into the detail of facts by way of information to the House, and as reasons for adopting this measure. The assertion of the House of Commons, in which their Lordships' Committee had unanimously concurred, was, that they were satisfied there was a design entertained, openly professed, and acted upon, which aimed at nothing less than what was stated in his Majesty's message, a traitorous conspiracy for the subversion of the established laws and constitution of the kingdom, and to introduce a system of anarchy and confusion, which had fatally prevailed in France; and he was sorry to say that this had not been discouraged; on the contrary, it had been encouraged in many instances,

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instances, and that at a time when we were at war for the support and maintenance of every thing that was dear to us, and to every civilized nation in the world; and after both Houses of Parliament had repeatedly expressed their decided opinions on the justness and necessity of that war. From the first moment that those who brought on the revolution in France found themselves strong enough to avow their real principles and designs, their mischievous system commenced, and they began to disturb this and other countries under the name of reform; they had proceeded wisely, if wisdom was an applicable epithet, and could be said ever to attend iniquity; they had proceeded to obtain the assistance of the people of different countries, well knowing that their system could not be established in their own without such assistance; and they found, as naturally they expected to find, men of profligate morals and desperate fortunes in many places ready to join them. Accordingly, in the beginning of the year 1792, it appeared, that a correspondence was established for the purpose of disseminating principles that were utterly inconsistent with the existence of the constitution of this country: He would say more, inconsistent with the existence of any constitution, or any form of government in this world, where there was either law, morality, religion, or order. In this situation, his Majesty had been advised to warn his subjects of the pernicious tendency of such principles, and the dissemination of them; accordingly, we found that his Majesty issued his proclamation in May 1792, on which the two Houses of Parliament addressed his Majesty in becoming terms of affection to his person and family, and professed inviolable attachment to the constitution; this was necessary for them and the good part of the community, for the preservation of their property and their lives: Precisely at this period it was, when these Societies came forward for a purpose to which it was extremely material for their Lordships to attend; they began by endeavouring to corrupt the minds of the lower classes of the Public, by disseminating pamphlets, containing the whole of their system; they passed a resolution on the 18th of May 1792, to distribute a cheap edition of a book, intitled, "Rights of Man." The author of that infamous libel announced to them his intention of publishing a cheap edition of that work, on which they not only resolved that such a proceeding would be highly praise-worthy, but that 3000 copies should be purchased at the expence of the Society. Had these proceedings been confined to one spot, possibly they might have remained unworthy notice; but, by an astonishing degree of activity and perseverance, which was hardly ever equalled in a good

cause, they had extended these principles in a very great degree, inasmuch that, by their own papers, it appeared there were similar clubs in almost every town in Great Britain, with whom they held a direct and constant correspondence. Here was the foundation of that system which had since ripened into treasonable practices by subsequent proceedings, and which were followed up with incredible diligence and activity; this was increased by the success of Dumourier in the Low Countries, which demonstrated the views of the parties, as well as their avowed concurrence with the National Convention of France, which was manifested by an address formally presented on behalf of these Societies to that Convention, and the answer to it by Barrere, the then President of the Convention; which was, in substance, that the National Convention applauded the spirit of British republicans, and that they trusted the moment was not very distant, but was fast approaching, when a National Convention should be established in England. His Lordship said he was induced to look at first on this as a wild, absurd fallacy of infatuation, with which the proceedings of that assembly seemed to teem; but he was compelled to give Barrere some credit for his foresight into the future intentions of these persons, since, on looking at the subsequent proceedings of the English republicans, he found it was only part of a settled and systematic plan for the subversion of the constitution of this country. The declaration of war, however, suspended this immediate intercourse between the English Societies and the French Convention; but yet the English Societies continued their assiduity. It was in vain that Parliament had expressed their repeated detestation of French principles; it was in vain every method was taken by Government to check their proceedings; it was in vain the generality of the kingdom expressed their determination to support our King and Constitution; still they went on, and increased their activity in proportion as any little advantage was obtained over the allies. This would be as evident to their Lordships as it appeared to him, if they looked on the names of the persons who had been admitted members of these Societies afterwards: They were members of the Convention, who had by the whole of their speeches and conduct, been marked by the most decided evidence of hostility to the constitution of this country; and they had brought us to the necessity of arming against them in our defence, and almost at this very moment, when we were arming for our own defence, and in support of our constitution, these Societies made honorary members, and entered the speeches of these persons in their books; the speeches of Barrere and St. André: Roland was also admitted
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an honorary member. It was really with astonishment that he at first read the speech of Barrere, in particular where he stated that it was false that the people of England were adverse to the proceedings of the Convention, and especially to the murder of their King; he allowed that some individuals in this country had expressed some disapprobation of that event; but insisted that it was not, by any means, the general feeling of the people of England. This was the speech which the members of the Society for Constitutional Information were pleased to applaud. Besides this, their Lordships would perceive in these Societies, a studious imitation of the proceedings of the National Convention; they adopted all their phrases in speaking, and all their forms in transacting business; the more manifestly to demonstrate that their sentiments were similar to those of the National Convention. All this proved, to his mind, that their views were to familiarize the lower classes of the people of this country to these proceedings, in order to prepare them to come to a resolution for the destruction of all rank, distinction, and order in society; every thing was to be swallowed up in the Jacobinical term—Citizen. This, among other of their servile imitations, was adopted by these Societies; and though it might be an insignificant circumstance in itself, yet, when coupled with others, went fully to develop their real principles and intentions. If he were speaking to an assembly much less enlightened than their Lordships were, he was confident he should have no difficulty in convincing them of the drift of all this; but, what was still of more importance, their Lordships would see there was not any one of the papers of these Societies, contained in the Report, which did not contain, not implied but avowed, expressed approbation of the principles of government maintained in the National Convention of France; principles, which their Lordships well knew to be utterly subversive of all government, and all order in society, and a direct attack on the constitution which we at present enjoyed. The persons who concurred in these sentiments, disseminated them with incredible industry among the people of Great Britain at large, and with more industry among the lower orders than any other; every speech that was seditious, every publication that was seditious, was disseminated among men who were the most likely to be led by their passions, in hopes finally of introducing anarchy and confusion in the country; for this purpose their Lordships would find that they had carried on correspondences in various parts of the kingdom, in almost every considerable manufacturing town, where similar resolutions had been entered into; in short, they had proceeded with

with fanatical enthusiasm in the cause of wickedness; they had at last determined to call what they termed a British Convention; in October 1793 they took measures for this purpose, and a Convention actually met in December following, when it appeared they were prepared to put their measures and designs into a state of activity; and they then proceeded to send a delegation to Edinburgh, where they met under the avowed title of the British Convention, and were proceeding to act in direct violation of all law, when magistracy interfered, and some of them were at this time justly suffering that punishment due to their crimes. This, it was hoped, would have had a proper effect; instead of which, the Societies had proceeded farther than ever, and, in their resolutions, had dared to arraign the proceedings of the courts which had tried those offenders, and to insult the justice of their country. His Lordship proceeded to read extracts from various pages of the Report, and maintained that in several parts of it open resistance to the law was recommended, and that in no part was there any thing evinced like a disposition to apply to Parliament.—In one part it was stated, “that the law ceases to be an object of obedience whenever it becomes an instrument of oppression.” Then was stated, as an instance of this oppression, the trials and punishment of the members of the Convention at Edinburgh, together with high panegyrics on the virtues of these individuals;—couple this with the sentence—“We see with regret, but we see without fear, that the period is fast approaching when the liberties of Britons must depend, not upon reason, to which they have long appealed, nor on their powers of expressing it, but on their firm and undaunted resolution to oppose tyranny by the same means by which it is exercised—” he would ask any honest man to lay his hand upon his heart, and say whether he did not really believe that the true spirit of this sentiment was to inculcate the doctrine of disobedience to the existing laws, and to repel by force every attempt to enforce such laws. His Lordship in his progress of animadversion upon the Report, read the minutes of the meeting of the London Corresponding Society, at the Globe Tavern, on the 20th of January 1794, which he censured as a piece of extravagant licentiousness, declaring that he would not offend their Lordships by reading the whole of it. Their next step was to animadvert on Parliament, and to overawe its conduct; this was also expressed in a strain too indecent for their Lordships to hear repeated; and then they complained of the due administration of justice in Scotland and in Ireland.—It was stated—“If we look to Ireland, we find that acknowledged privilege of the people, to meet for the support and protection

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of their rights and liberties, is attempted, by terrors, to be taken away by a late *infamous* Act of Parliament."—In Scotland—"The wicked hand of power has been impudently exerted, without even the *wretched formality* of an Act of Parliament."—Here it was held out in one case, that an Act of Parliament was an infamous Act, and in the other, that an Act of Parliament, if these Societies should disapprove of it, was to be considered as a wretched formality; both tending to one point, namely, that the authority of either was to be resisted by open force.—It was stated indeed that they looked for a Parliamentary Reform by legal means; but was any man simple enough to believe that such was their object? on the contrary, was it not evident that the whole of their plan was to bring Parliament into contempt in the eyes of the Public, and that this was meditated long ago? In all the proceedings of these Societies, they attempted to hold forth the old thread-bare cloak of a Parliamentary Reform; but this was a flimsy and miserable pretext; for their real intentions, he said, were disguised to no man. He would ask their Lordships, how did it appear that they meant to obtain this object? Not by a legal and moderate appeal to Parliament by petition, not by any mode prescribed by the constitution, but by illegally assembling and declaring, in a room in a tavern, that if a Reform were denied to them by Parliament, they would have it, or risk their lives. They not only thus manifested their treasonable intentions, but pronounced Parliament an Assembly of traitors and thieves. They despised the three branches of the Legislature, and announced their desire of appealing to the people. He charged the authors of these proceedings therefore with nothing less than an intention to introduce into this country the anarchy of France, and he hesitated not to pronounce, that their designs were not only criminal, but treasonable. Their object was not a Parliamentary Reform, but the destruction of our monarchy; the destruction of that House, and the destruction of the House of Commons; the subversion of all law, order, rank, distinction, property—with nothing less than this did he charge the authors of these proceedings; and he would say again they were treasonable practices. To maintain this assertion, he need only to advert to some passages, in which they stated, in the most inflamed and treasonable terms, their views. It was asked, By what means shall we seek redress? "We answer, that men in a state of civilized society, are bound to seek redress of grievances from the laws, as long as any redress can be obtained by the laws;" (then followed a text from Scripture, which he would not prophane, and hurt the ears of their Lordships by repeating,) but the

the conclusion was, "we must have redress from *our own laws*, and not from the laws of our plunderers, enemies, and oppressors." Here the people were told again, that all obligation to the laws ceased, for the Houses of Parliament were filled with their plunderers, enemies, and oppressors.—They then proceeded to create themselves into a Convention to set Parliament aside altogether. These were treasonable acts, and their Lordships were no more to believe the professions of these men, that they only wished for a Parliamentary Reform, by legal means, than the defence of a murderer was to be admitted in a court of justice, if he said his intentions were good, and asserted that he would act in a legal and constitutional manner. Such a defence would be a mockery, and only serve to excite sentiments of indignation in the breasts of a judge or a jury. Such an excuse was absurd, when the very acts of these Societies evidently shewed, that they meditated an intention of carrying into effect tumult, anarchy, and rebellion. His Lordship next took notice of a circular letter sent to the different Societies, from those formed in the metropolis, requesting an immediate answer, with the names of those whom they might please to delegate to meet in a National Convention, with a return also of their numbers, if it could be ascertained. After reprobating this proceeding in very strong terms, he next called their attention to the resolutions entered into at a meeting held at Chalk Farm, on which he pointedly animadverted, and observed, that a little before that meeting was held, an opinion had been given in another place, in which he concurred entirely, namely, that if the law was not sufficient to suppress all these proceedings, it ought to be altered and strengthened, as it must be allowed that many of these proceedings were had in contempt of the existing laws of the country. He declared, that he had no doubt whatever of these being treasonable practices. He would not, he said, disgust their Lordships, by reading the whole of the resolutions entered into at Chalk Farm, as they had heard them read by the Clerk at the table, which shewed the violence and intention of this Society. From these it was manifest, that they, in the most undisguised manner, had exhorted the people to arm; and that the occasion of their assembling, and the cause for which they met, was not to be decided by Parliament, but by that illegal meeting. This, he contended, was calling on the People to rise in arms against Parliament; it was endeavouring to alienate them from their allegiance; it was an avowal of treasonable purposes, as exhorting the people to resist the laws. From a view of all these facts, and from this view of their proceedings, he was convinced, that there existed

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existed a treasonable conspiracy, for the express purpose of subverting Parliament, annihilating the Legislature, and introducing guilt, anarchy, and confusion into the kingdom. This was the conclusion drawn by their Lordships' respectable Committee; it was the conclusion which he himself drew from the circumstances; and, if it was conclusive in the minds of their Lordships, they would proceed with dispatch in adopting such measures as would put a stop to the spreading evil. In some of the Societies, he remarked, that proposals had been made for providing arms for the members; and if any thing was wanting to carry complete conviction to the minds of the most incredulous persons, of their evil and treasonable intentions, the circumstance of their arming their friends must be sufficient. When this fact was established, that they armed to effectuate by force, if possible, what they could not otherwise accomplish (for his Lordship could not have a doubt of the issue of such a trial), it would surely be admitted to be a necessary caution to strengthen the Executive Government, and enable it to suppress this growing mischief, and prevent a farther progress of an evil, which might otherwise be ultimately productive of a civil war.

It had, he knew, been intimated, that the measure which he had to propose to their Lordships, was strong and harsh; the necessity of the case, however, required that it should be carried into execution. If it were argued, that there was incongruity in adopting a measure that would attach to the whole, because a part was criminal, he would argue, without meaning any personal compliment to those with whom he acted, that their Lordships might repose with safety in the clemency, and the exercise of any power vested in the Executive Government. That there was, and had for some time existed, a conspiracy of a treasonable nature, there could nor be the smallest doubt. He was aware that it had been said, that those individuals who could alone be charged with criminal intentions were insignificant in number, in talents, and in character; but in his opinion it was of little weight to say that a conspiracy was composed of a few mean and obscure individuals; men who had nothing to risk, being bankrupts in fortune as well as character; for he would be bold to say, that if all conspiracies noticed in history were searched into, they would be found to consist of such a description of persons, whom no one would individually trust, in whom scarce any one had individually any confidence. If we looked at the history of the world, from the earliest times, we should find that the overthrow of all governments had been occasioned, in the first instance, by obscure individuals. We should find that Oliver Cromwell was

looked on in the House of Commons as a man of little consideration, that he was almost despised at first, and not thought to be capable of such great designs as he afterwards proved himself able to accomplish *. The very revolution of France, that had been the cause of such mighty mischief to all Europe, was brought about by a few; he understood from the best authority, that of Dumourier (who well knew the private springs of action that effected the revolution in France), that, just previous to its happening, there was not one in ten, nay that there were not 200 persons in all France who wished for it; and Robespierre himself was regarded for a time as a madman in the National Convention. It was want of early caution and vigorous measures in the Executive Government that enabled these desperate characters to succeed; we should regard the fate of the Monarchy of France as a serious lesson. Having dwelt on this and other topics for a considerable time with uncommon force of argument, Lord Grenville said, for the reasons he had stated, he trusted their Lordships would concur with him in opinion, that the obscurity of the individuals was no security against their being able to introduce a scene of horror and confusion, which, though it would doubtless be easily subdued, had much better be prevented. He therefore concluded with moving, "That the Bill for empowering his Majesty to secure and detain such persons as he may suspect to be conspiring against his person and government, be now read a first time." It was read. His Lordship then moved, "That this Bill be now read a second time."

Earl Stanhope said, that, differing from the Secretary of State in all his conclusions, he must oppose the measure; he considered the Bill as neither more nor less than the establishment of such a system as that which had existed in France before the Revolution; a system for erecting a *Bastille* in this country, and for establishing *Lettres de Cachet*, by which any man in the kingdom might be imprisoned for any length of time, at the will of ministers, without proof, without reason, and even without trial, and after all, without redress of any kind for such imprisonment. He should have expected that when such a proposition was only mentioned in a British House of Parliament, it would have instantly excited general abhorrence. There was no situation in which such a measure as the present ought, in his opinion, to have been attempted, much less in which it could be justified, to the extent to which it was proposed to be carried. The Report which had been presented by the Committee, did not by any means state suf-

* Vide Hume's History of England, Vol. vi. p. 274, and Vol. vii. p. 29, octavo edit. 1789.

sufficient grounds on which so strong a measure as the present could be founded. He assured their Lordships he should endeavour to argue that question fairly, calmly, and dispassionately. He had attended to the Secretary of State as closely and as well as he was able, and he hoped their Lordships would attend to him, for he hesitated not to declare, that, before he proceeded to the minuteness of investigation, before he entered into detail, he required only a few minutes of attention, without prejudice or prepossession, and he trusted he should be able to do away all the grounds laid down in support of this measure, as easily as he could disperse dust and feathers, or straws and trifles; their Lordships would permit him therefore to state what the charge was against the members of these Societies, and what had been done by them to ground that charge.—A Convention—a Congress—a Meeting—Assembly, or give it what name they pleased, the name was nothing, the object every thing. A Convention had been agreed upon by these Societies. Two considerations presented themselves to view upon this point—the object of the parties, and the means by which that object was to be attained.—If either of these were legal, no honest man would be disposed to cavil about the name. He would consider the charge first, and then he would take the answer to it. The charge was, that the members of these Societies avowed their intention not to apply to Parliament for a Reform; but that they intended to supersede the House of Commons, and to take upon themselves the power and function of legislation. There appeared to him to be a miserable deficiency of logic in that conclusion; for it was certainly possible (he did not say it was advisable) for a body of men to form a resolution for obtaining a Parliamentary Reform, and that legally, without any application to Parliament. He should again say he did not think it advisable, because the parties were not likely to attain their object; but they certainly meant to do so legally, as the words “legal and constitutional means” occurred repeatedly in every one of the papers of the Societies stated in the Report. He spoke the more freely upon this point, as he never had belonged to any of these Societies, and he did not approve of the meeting of a Convention, such as these Societies proposed; because, however legal their conduct might be, it was not likely to be effectual: It had been tried already, and had failed, and was likely to fail again. It had been tried in the year 1780 and 1781, and the object was not obtained. The probability or the improbability of success had however nothing to do with the legality of the plan. To shew the success of a plan for bringing about a Parliamentary Reform, without applying to Parliament, he would

put a case which might easily happen. Suppose, for instance that all those who at present possessed the right of election should determine not to vote at a future election for any person who would not engage and pledge himself to agree to a given plan for a Parliamentary Reform; and suppose all those who were so elected should be faithful to their engagement—here would be at once a plan for a Parliamentary Reform carried into effect, without any application to Parliament, and yet it would be perfectly legal. It was said that these papers had extravagant ideas of Reform—"Annual Parliaments and Universal Suffrage;"—such ideas were not peculiar to these persons. He could shew to their Lordships that there was a person of the name of Richmond, who had held precisely the same opinion, had delivered that opinion in Parliament, and had agitated it without doors. If therefore the House would allow this Richmond to entertain these ideas with impunity, they must at least tolerate the members of these Societies in following the example. The Secretary of State said, that these Societies had expressed disapprobation of the Parliament of Ireland; he would shew them that the same sort of intemperate expressions had been made use of with respect to the Parliament of England. Let their Lordships recollect a Congress, a Meeting, or a Committee, in the county of Kent, in the year 1780, with many great and respectable names in it, some Members of that House, and some that were not so; the late Earl of Camden, the Earl of Jersey, the Earl of Radnor, and among the rest the Right Hon. Tommy Townshend.

Lord Sydney denied that he had ever belonged to a Congress or a Convention either in the county of Kent or elsewhere. With regard to the name the Noble Earl had chosen to call him by, he should never be ashamed of it.

Earl Stanhope proceeded. He said he never asserted that his Lordship was a Member of a Convention; he spoke only of a Kentish Committee, which he could prove that Noble Lord attended. At this meeting were present a brother of the Noble Secretary of State, Colonel Fitzpatrick, Mr. Fox, Mr. Fortescue, and many other high and distinguished characters. They afterwards met in London and in Westminster, and they stated several points for a Reform in Parliament; and the meeting entered into several spirited resolutions, and did not speak of Parliament in very soft or delicate expressions. A Congress, for so he believed it had been called, met in London, and met where? Not in an obscure place, but in a place of the most public kind, the Common Council Chamber of the Guildhall of the City; to which assembly Aldermen Wilkes and Sawbridge were sent as delegates on behalf of the City. A meet-

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ing was also held at the Thatched House Tavern, at which some Lords that he then saw were present. At that meeting also resolutions were entered into. He did not say that all the individuals assembled agreed to these resolutions, but the Society agreed to them; and no question was ever started upon the legality of the meeting, or of its measures. He next took notice of the quintuple alliance; which had agreed to call a Convention, precisely as these Societies had done. Another meeting, upon the subject of Reform, had been held in Scotland; and by the express recommendation of the Lord Advocate, it was called a Convention. This he only mentioned to prove that there was nothing illegal in the word Convention. Their Lordships so well knew what the conduct of Mr. Pitt had been upon the subject of Parliamentary Reform, that it was unnecessary for him to enter into a discussion respecting it. He would therefore next call the attention of the House to the great names that had supported the very doctrines avowed by these Societies, Mr. Pitt, Sir George Saville, and other characters of weight and consideration in the country. He begged their Lordships in particular to attend to the declaration of Sir George Saville, a character whom every one who knew esteemed. That great and good man had in his letter to his constituents, published much severer words on the Parliament, than these Societies had done by any of their resolutions, and instead of being blamed, he was revered for it. [His Lordship read an extract from Sir George Saville's letter.] He also took notice of the Duke of Richmond's letter to Colonel Sharman, in which his Grace expresses his concern that Mr. Pitt's motion had not made one proselyte, and declares that he has no hopes of any reform from Parliament, but that the people must do every thing for themselves. In point of justice, therefore, if any of the members of these Societies were to be sent to prison for disrespectful expressions to Parliament, they must send with them, for the same offence, *Citizen* Richmond. As instances of the freedom that had with impunity been taken with the character of Parliament, he quoted the letter of the Right Hon. Edmund Burke to the inhabitants of Bristol, and that to Sir Hercules Langrishe in 1790, on the subject of the exclusion of the Irish Catholics from the elective franchise, and commented at some length on both, contending, that he had afforded irrefragable proof that such meetings were not illegal; but he said, he would add one argument, which must be deemed incontrovertible. Before the passing of the Convention Bill in Ireland, the law with respect to public assemblies of the people was the same in that country as in England. In order, therefore, to alter it, a Bill had been

been passed to declare such assemblies illegal, which was a clear confession, that that which after the passing of the Bill was illegal, was strictly legal before the passing of the Bill. He ridiculed the idea of a conspiracy being meditated, and carried on by meetings, of which every transaction had been printed in the public newspapers, many of them two years ago; and maintained that if what was stated in the Report was illegal, Government ought to have prosecuted them long since; not to have done which was not only a gross neglect of duty, but amounted in his mind to misprision of treason. One part of the charge against these Societies was, that they had circulated a cheap edition of the Rights of Man. Upon that point he could state a fact, which their Lordships ought to know, although the Secretary of State, he believed, did not know it himself, but it was extremely material: The Attorney General of that day, Sir Archibald McDonald, had indicted Mr. Paine, the author of the Rights of Man, for a libel; and that book had been declared by a jury a libel on the constitution of this country. In all the cheap editions of this book, circulated by order of those Societies, the parts selected by the Attorney-General were omitted; the inference therefore was, that the book in that state was a legal publication, for their Lordships would not presume that the Attorney-General had so much neglected his duty as to pass any part of a public libel by, without inserting it in the indictment. His Lordship said, the address to the Jacobins and Convention, which the Report of the other House curiously states to have been made on the eve of a commencement of a war, was legal in his opinion, as long as the war was not begun. The answer, which the Convention returned to that address, was as curiously stated as a crime, without its being known whether the answer was approved or even read. This was a course of strange and violent presumption, at which the human mind revolted, and which could scarcely be repeated with gravity. The Report too was as defective in fact, as it was in candour. A charge had been made against one of these Societies for having admitted Barrere and Roland honorary members; there was nothing on the face of it illegal, for the speeches of these persons were not stated in the Report, and their Lordships had no evidence of their unconstitutional tendency; besides, the Secretary of State mistook the situation of Roland; he was not a Member of the Convention—it was impossible he should be so, for he was a minister, and placemen did not sit in Parliament in France as they did here. If, therefore, any complaint was to be exhibited against the members of these Societies, for adopting of any part, or applauding these speeches,

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speeches, we should have evidence of the speeches themselves. The Secretary of State had hinted at some parts of these speeches; but not a word was said of their contents in the Report. Besides, he maintained, that the Report itself was extremely unfair, and made up entirely against all the rules of evidence; parts of the correspondence of the Societies, and those the most unfavourable, were selected, and the favourable parts omitted; whereas in point of justice, and by the rules of law, the whole of the books of the Society should be quoted in the Report, and set forth at full length, that the House might not be called upon to judge from mutilated, garbled, and detached passages, but fairly and equitably from the whole context: And, for aught their Lordships could know to the contrary, the whole taken together might not only be an innocent, but also a meritorious work. In one part of the resolutions of these Societies they stated, "that the friends of *reform* are the friends of *peace*; their principles can be promoted only by peaceable means; they know of no other method of obtaining the object they desire." On the subject of arms, his Lordship quoted the authority of Blackstone, in the first chapter of the first book of his Commentaries, as follows: "The fifth and last auxiliary right of the subject, that I shall at present mention, is that of having arms for their defence, suitable to their condition and degree, and such as are allowed by law." In order to give some colour to the suggestion in the Report, that arms were preparing of a new kind, a story had been circulated the preceding day of an innkeeper having received 4000 stand of arms, which had been seized, and, after all, had been proved to have been sent from Birmingham to London for the use of Government. He desired to know what other arms had been traced or discovered? The Earl also quoted the opinion of Lord Hawkesbury, on the propriety of arming the people, who had said that there never was an instance of an armed people using their power to their own destruction; in which opinion, his Lordship said, he coincided completely, for he wished that instead of 30,000, we had 400,000 militia; were that the case there would be nothing to fear from internal commotions. The whole of the measure proposed to be grounded on the Report of the two Committees, his Lordship said, appeared to him to be unwise and unwarrantable; and the fear pretended to be felt on it was to be compared to nothing so aptly as the windmill of Don Quixote. Supposing, however, that there was any foundation for fearing the machinations of a few individuals, how unjust was it that the freedom of all the people of England should be thrown at the feet of the minister, and rendered dependent

pendent on his will, on account of the misbehaviour of a small number. The Earl concluded with desiring their Lordships for a moment to reflect on the possible effect of all this. Suppose a stream of water that had often fertilized a beautiful plain had broken its mounds, and for a time had done some trifling injury to the soil—miserably unwise would that husbandman be, who, for no other reason, endeavoured to choak up the current, and stop the river altogether. Was it not notorious that such an effort would be fruitless? The career of the river might be checked for a time, but the torrent would afterwards burst forth with greater impetuosity, bear down all opposition, and spread ruin and devastation through the adjacent country. So in the case before their Lordships, the flowing of human reason Government had not the power of checking, but, like the prudent husbandman, they might with care direct its channel into its proper course, and set all to rights again, by widening its banks, and digging its bed deeper. The same argument will apply in the present instance: “Do justice,” said he, “produce measures of mild and temperate reform, and give the people peace; by that means, my Lords, you may be able to guide their reasoning, and keep it safely within its due limits.”

Earl Spencer said, he felt himself called upon by an allusion which the Noble Earl had made, to a meeting held in the year 1780. He denied the conduct imputed to him at that meeting: He had been present it was true, and approved of the general purpose of the meeting; but if the Noble Earl had examined any proper account of what passed, he would find that he did not go to the full extent that other persons present had wished to do; that he differed from several of the resolutions entered into, and gave his reasons at the time why he so differed. But that fact out of the question, his Lordship said, one thing struck him in examining the Report, viz. that in the language of the letter from the Corresponding Societies to that denominated the Friends of the People, to which many most respectable characters belonged, the word *Convention* was not used. This he conceived to be a mere blind, to cover and mask their concealed object; and, in like manner, they used the terms “legal and constitutional,” only, in his judgment, the better to varnish over their designs. The measure proposed was undoubtedly a strong one, but it was not stronger than the occasion and the situation of the country called for: He conceived it to be absolutely necessary, and he gave ministers his hearty thanks for having brought it forward. If the measure wanted justification, he would conclude with giving it in the words of Blackstone as nearly as he could re-

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collect them, viz. "That it was well worth while to surrender a part of their liberties for a time, in order to secure the whole for ever." The sentiments and the proceedings of that meeting were very different indeed from what seemed to actuate those more recent Societies to which the present Bill applied.

Lord Hay (Earl of Kinnoul) spoke shortly on the same side, and vindicated the measure as becoming the wisdom of Administration, and fit for the occasion.

Lord Boringdon said, when the meetings that had been alluded to were held, and in agitation, he had taken no part on the occasion; neither being a Member of the Legislature at the time, nor indeed in the country. But he could not think of giving a silent vote on the present question; and perhaps a more momentous one never was agitated within the walls of that House. He was surprised there could be any difference of opinion on the Report; that difference of opinion could only arise on two grounds; either that the facts in that Report were not fairly stated, or, if fairly stated, that the language in which they were conveyed did not bear the same signification in one Noble Lord's mind that they did in the mind of another. The existence of a most dangerous conspiracy against the government of this country was evident, unless it could be supposed, that the Committee had abused the confidence reposed in them; or that the same words in the English language were capable of different significations. He entertained a very high opinion, individually and collectively, of those Members who had composed the two Committees to whom those papers had been referred; and as such, he could not suppose that they could or would mistake facts: And as to the language, he thought it was so plain, that it could not admit of two interpretations: Under these circumstances, he was disposed to rest his confidence on both; and he thought the necessity such, as to call for the interference of the Legislature. He approved of the measure, because, though a strong one, he was convinced that the necessity of the case called for a strong measure. When he saw many of the most respectable characters in the kingdom, who had long opposed the present Government, go over to the aid of ministers, then it was that he perceived the seeds of all the mischief that had since happened, and saw it was high time that an effectual check should be put to the progress of such destructive proceedings. By declaring himself an alarmist, he meant not that he felt any idle, weak, or unmanly alarms, and was as much for the rights, the fair, pure, equitable rights of man, as any body. The most valuable of those rights, however, appeared

peared to him to be protection from the laws under which a man lived, and being no friend to the modern system of France, or the introduction of innovating, metaphysical principles, it became his duty to join in strengthening the hands of Government, when he thought any attack was attempted to be made upon the constitution of the country. He considered the present measure as a wise one, and as a measure likely to prove efficient. He should, therefore, give his sanction and assent to the Bill.

Lord Thurlow said, that before he entered into the question, it was proper to notice the manner in which the Bill had come into that House. He considered it first as founded upon the King's Message; and next on the proceedings which had since taken place upon it in the other House of Parliament, and been transmitted from thence to their Lordships, upon which their own Committee had reported. Having thus been enabled to ground their judgments on the subject matter submitted to their consideration, it became the duty of both Houses to proceed in the business as they might see cause. In his opinion the Lords had acted in the wisest way, by taking it up as a foundation of a general measure in the manner they had done; but he could not help saying, that the debate upon the Report of the House of Commons, at least a great part of it, in many instances, that night, had gone rather wide of the mark. The only communication before them, was the Report of their own Committee, and the Bill which was founded upon that Report. The general principle upon which he conceived the Bill to be founded, was necessity; and when once that necessity was established, there was nothing so strong in the measure as ought to create an objection to it. Obedience to the laws, he affirmed to be a duty, which every Legislature was bound to enforce, and if it was clear that the proceedings, which made the Bill necessary, tended to produce that anarchy in this country which had prevailed in France (and it must be allowed, that anarchy was the most cruel of all tyranny), then it was necessary to adopt this measure, which, though it for a time seemed to infringe upon the principles of the constitution, only took away just as much as secured the rest, which certainly was a wise and commendable policy, and under certain circumstances absolutely necessary. He reprobated the practice of introducing names of persons, or even allusions to those who were under trial; it was unfair, unjust, and unknown in the practice of the English Legislature; they ought not to be prejudged or pronounced guilty beforehand. From what he had seen of the Report, it contained many facts that amounted to heinous and aggravated sedition, but he did not

think that they amounted to any higher crime. If sufficient facts and inferences of their subsequent conduct could be proved upon those who had acted so seditiously, undoubtedly evidence of that sort might carry their offences up to treason, but he thought it proper to decline going any farther upon that head, not only because there could not be any such evidence before the House, but as there were certain persons in custody, who had been committed for treason. Much allusion, his Lordship observed, had been made to former opinions and sentiments entertained by different persons on the subject of Parliamentary Reform. The conduct of those persons he considered to be highly reprehensible; they had calumniated the Parliament, because a fanciful system of theirs happened not to be adopted, and they therefore deserved condign punishment, which punishment, if it had been inflicted, might have produced the good effect of curbing the violence of those Reformers who had come after them. But though they, to whom he alluded, had escaped, that was no excuse for others who wished to carry their schemes farther. He repeated, that from what he had seen of the Report, he thought there was ground for punishment, as far as punishment for misdemeanour goes; but he begged leave to decline giving any further opinion. A gross mistake seemed to exist respecting the extent of the Bill then proposed, which in fact gave no additional power to the Executive Government, as to confining and detaining suspected persons, which they had not before, except this, namely, that they could be so secured and detained for a certain time, without being brought to trial but at the instance of Government: It had been called a *suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act*; how that term got into vulgar language, he knew not, but he was not disposed to quarrel with those, who so called it, as upon a reference to their own Journals, their Lordships would find that it was, on every occasion when such a Bill had been agitated, so described in the margin. If the Bill was passed the next day, the *Habeas Corpus Act* still would remain in full force, and magistrates acting under this Act, must consider that to be the case, and act with proportionate caution.—He recurred to the different periods in history, when this sort of Act had been most the subject of Parliamentary discussion. In Charles the Second's time, he said, it had been in disuse, and was renewed in the year 1704, but it had been generally too much tainted with party. A Bill of this sort had been at different times brought forward, in cases where an actual insurrection took place, or where conspiracies were strongly suspected, although they were of so hidden a nature that they could not be im-

mediately traced; and in the last case it became prudent and necessary to secure and detain persons suspected, till such conspiracy could be traced. As to the crimes charged in the Report, certainly many persons might be committed under this Act, but he thought most of them could be brought before the common courts, whether this act passed or not. With regard to the manner in which any additional discretionary power put into the hands of ministers might be used, he must say, that he should not have the least hesitation in risking his own individual liberty, his property, and his life, in the discretion of the Noble Secretary of State, and believed he could no where be safer. This matter of opinion however was not a fair argument when any extraordinary power was to be given to the Executive Government. In such instances, nothing more ought to be trusted in the hands of ministers than the urgency of the case absolutely required; to argue that way would be to distinguish the officer from the office, and might put it in the power of a bad man, to do that, which a good man never would do if he had the power. In all cases where punishment was merited, the best remedy to prevent similar offences, was to punish in an exemplary manner. He mentioned a pamphlet published by Debrett which had that day been put into his hand, reflecting highly upon the Judges, and grossly calumniating many Members of that House; it was disgraceful and indecent, such as he thought never ought to pass unpunished. He urged the necessity of supporting magistracy, and said, that vilifying and misrepresenting the conduct of judges and magistrates entrusted with the administration of justice, and the laws of the country, was a crime of a very heinous nature, most destructive in its consequences, because it tended to lower them in the opinion of those who ought to feel a proper reverence and respect for their high and important situations; and when it was stated to the wicked and depraved, that their judges and magistrates were ignorant and corrupt, it tended to lessen the respect of the people for the laws, weakened their efficacy, and destroyed the authority of magistrates, insomuch that if a magistrate generally held to be ignorant and corrupt sentenced a seditious person to condign punishment, all authority and respect for such magistrate being lost, the example of the punishment was at an end.

The Earl of Lauderdale said, he rose with a design of submitting to them a motion before he sat down, which he was confident could not be resisted by any Noble Lord in that House; and the effect of which would be to postpone for the present the further discussion of the measure under their

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Lordships' consideration—he meant to conclude with moving the question of Adjournment. Before, however, he proceeded to state the particular reasons upon which he should ground this motion, he thought it fitting, that he should take somewhat of a general view of the subject under discussion, and of some of the arguments which had been adduced in support of it.—In doing this, his Lordship scouted the idea of the existence of any real danger actually to be apprehended from those conspiracies with which the country was kept in alarm, but which he believed existed only in the weak heads, or insidious designs, of ministers. He had attended particularly to the Report, which had been made to their Lordships, but could not find out in that, or any circumstance connected with it, the least grounds for the very strong and alarming measure, which it was intended by the proposed Bill to introduce; an innovation and infringement upon the constitution of the country, unwarranted by any principle of policy, necessity, or precedent, that could be mentioned, and coming only as one of those extraordinary and unheard-of measures, which the present Administration had been daily introducing as part of their settled system for the last two years. It certainly, though the greatest, was not the only innovation which they had lately brought forward; they had begun with an Alien Bill; then a Traiterous Correspondence Bill; the next extraordinary measures heard of had been that of bringing foreign troops into the kingdom, and that of raising Voluntary Subscriptions without the consent of Parliament, measures sufficiently novel in their nature to rouse the feelings of alarm and distrust in British bosoms; and they were to be followed up by this Bill, which, whatever might be the opinion of other Noble Lords, he would contend amounted to a suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act; the whole forming a chain of revolutionary measures tending to establish in this country a new system of revolutionary government. When he thought for a moment upon the supposed dangers to which the Report alluded, or even, for argument sake, allowing them to be as great as the alarm of some had exaggerated them to be, what danger was to be apprehended from the ill-conducted measures of a set of zealots, consisting of 200 at the most, and compared that with the strong measure proposed as a remedy, every well-wisher to his country must agree, that the remedy was far more alarming than the danger possibly could be. Ten years ago, when schemes of reform, precisely the same as those avowed by the Societies whose proceedings were made the subject of the Report on the table, were proposed, countenanced, and encouraged by the Duke of Richmond, and others of his Majesty's

ty's present Cabinet, no such thing as a Bill to suspend the *Habeas Corpus* Act had ever been thought of. The Noble Secretary of State had allowed that the conspiracies which he dreaded so much, were only formed of the lower class and refuse of the people; he had, however, taken care to state also, the great mischiefs that had frequently arisen from the most obscure individuals; and though the numbers were by all said to be very inconsiderable, yet their power was rated very high, and their proceedings were to be dreaded as most important, so much so, that they were to overawe and controul the functions of Parliament, and overturn the constitution itself. What was all this, his Lordship said, but mere assertion? had a single fact been produced that proved the truth, or even the probability of this being well founded? Not one. Who was there that supposed that Lovet and the 200 madmen whom he was said to have collected at Chalk Farm, and they certainly were madmen who could have formed such absurd notions of their own strength and power, to carry their wild ridiculous schemes into execution; who was there in that House, or in the country, who could say that any serious harm was to be dreaded from such men, or who believed that if he was so mad as to make the attempt to collect persons for such purposes, he would have got twenty to assemble? The whole contents of the Report were what ministers, that House, and the country at large, had been fully acquainted with for the last two years; and if they were proceedings of the alarming nature now described, ministers were highly culpable, nay criminal, in allowing them to pass so long unnoticed. What were the materials that proved this dark and hidden conspiracy? Seditious papers, that had appeared in every newspaper in the country, and treasonable writings, that had every where been handed about, printed, published, and circulated for the last fourteen months; nay more, so little mischievous had they been thought, that these seditious and treasonable proceedings, from which alone the conspiracies were to be proved, had been published in all the newspapers, paid the duty as advertisements at the Stamp-office, and been for a considerable time back a source of revenue to the very Government which they were intended to overturn and destroy; in short, upon this point it was clear that ministers had long been perfectly acquainted with the whole proceedings which they now thought so dangerous, and had been nursing the conspiracies till it suited their own purposes to bring them forward, and keep up that system of alarm and terror which it was so much their interest to do. Ministers themselves knew that they had brought the country into a deplorable dilemma, out of which they

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they could tell nothing of the period when we were likely to be extricated. Much praise and much honour were due to the gallant conduct of the brave Sir Charles Grey, and his successful army; but however highly they deserved the panegyric of their country, it was unfortunate to reflect, that those measures only served as a delusion to encourage this country to go on with a ruinous war, the objects of which had been entirely changed since its commencement; for what was Marti-
nico to the projected conquest of France, and the forcing of a government upon that great country? Or was it to be supposed that the rulers in France, be they who they might at the time, would put in comparison such successes on our part with their own heads, and relinquish their exertions in defence of their country? Throughout the whole duration of the war there had never been very flattering prospects for this country, and certainly the prospects at present were less so than ever. We had found already that one of our allies could not go on unless he was paid by this country, and another was under the necessity of borrowing money out of it, which was nearly the same. All these circumstances, his Lordship said, were much more serious and important, and much more fit for the consideration of ministers, for the House, and for the People, than those idle and flimsy pretexts which they have conjured up to alarm the country, when, in reality, the only purpose was to blind the people, and bring them into their own views. The only thing that made their measures so little surprising was, that it was a continuance of the same system, to delude, which they had uniformly practised since ever they came into power. Looking at the persons who were favourers and supporters of the measures of the day, it was extremely easy, his Lordship observed, to account for their conduct. One description of them consisted of those who, meaning perhaps very honestly, and really feeling all those alarms which have been so artfully excited, were ready to concur in any measures which might be adopted for the purpose of affording them security. The other description were those who, for the purposes of retaining that power which they had gotten into their hands, found it necessary occasionally to excite those jealousies and alarms which might serve to divert the public attention from their conduct, and so preserve their respective situations. Into this principle might be resolved the several alarms which had followed each other. First, they began with the Proclamation; the effect of which was hardly subsided, when the public alarm was again excited by the arming of the Militia, and the calling together the Parliament at fourteen days notice. This was followed up by this third and grand measure of depriving the people of their birth-right. If these Societies were criminal,

nal, certainly the creators of them, and the principles they avowed, were much more so: He had already mentioned some of them. The Noble Secretary of State had charged the Corresponding Society with an open design of subverting the constitution, demonstrable from their adoption of the principles contained in Paine's works. What these were he would not then discuss, but be they what they might, many who were at present his Majesty's ministers, might be considered not only as the fathers of that Society, but of those principles, although the Society had the advantage over those ministers in being at least consistent in their adherence to them, notwithstanding the desertion and threats of those who had deserted them. With respect to the violence contained in the works of Mr. Paine, he believed they would hardly be found to exceed some sentiments contained in that celebrated letter of the Duke of Richmond to Colonel Sharman, in which the negative prerogative of the Crown was resisted in the strongest terms, as unfit to be trusted in the hands of one man; and in every particular, almost the same in substance, the doctrines laid down in Paine's works on the subject of Parliamentary abuses were asserted and maintained. There were others of his Majesty's ministers, who, in conjunction with Mr. Horne Tooke, whom he heard they had committed to the Tower, had signed resolutions, and avowed their principles to be the same as contained in that letter. He reprobated such mean and shameful apostacy. There was another point in which he considered the conduct of ministers highly reprehensible: In good old times, when the true spirit and genius of the British constitution was practised as well as known, it had always been a maxim, that however the public favour might go along with one set of men or another, yet the necessity of encouraging the patriotism and exertions of those who watched over the conduct of the existing Administration had been always admitted; but it was now become the policy of men in power to attempt at establishing this principle, that no worth or virtue was to be found out of Administration, nor no friends to the people but among their rulers. Hence it was easy to see, that the struggle was not, as had formerly been the case, between two contending parties, but that it was between their own existence in power and the existence of the constitution itself. It certainly would become them to be more cautious, and less inattentive to the true principles of the British constitution, than their late and present conduct shewed them to be. By the present measure, which was a greater infringement than had ever been made before upon the constitution, they seemed to disrespect and despise the wisdom of their ancestors, and to set all precedents at defiance. In every former case, where a suspension of the

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Habeas Corpus Act took place, it was founded upon some open overt act, and not upon such ridiculous and untenable grounds as the Report on the table held out. Whatever respect the Noble and Learned Lord, or any other person might have, for a Secretary of State, he should be extremely sorry to see any minister vested with an extraordinary discretionary power greater than the exigency of the case required, let his character be ever so respectable. Noble Lords might recollect what happened after 1715, in Sir W. Windham's time, when very respectable country gentlemen were brought up from Norfolk, and other distant counties, and confined; which afforded a sufficient proof how far power might be abused. At that time, however, there was an open rebellion in the country. In 1722 the Bill was founded, not upon such papers as those in the Report, but on a specific communication to Parliament, contained in the King's message. In 1745 the situation of the country was similar to what it had been described in 1715; there was an open and avowed rebellion in the country. All that time, till within the last twelve years, there had been a Pretender and a Jacobite party in existence. Members of both Houses of Parliament had been notoriously of that description, and numbers were known to be disaffected in particular counties. Other ministers, however, had never thought of suspending the *Habeas Corpus* Act, under such circumstances as the present, and it might have been better had it not been attempted at this day. From this he might conclude, that either the *Habeas Corpus* Act ought never to have existed till within the last twelve years, or that it ought never to exist again.

His Lordship recommended a system of moderation and wisdom, as much more likely to produce good effects than the present conduct of ministers, and asked, if after all they had done they did not succeed, where they might be expected to stop? Next year they might probably find themselves in a similar, if not in a worse situation; and they must go on with some further infringement upon the constitution, for being once embarked in this sea of innovation, there could be no guessing where their revolutionary system might end. If mention was ever made of the mischiefs and imperfections which had gradually crept into our constitution, they were immediately told of the danger of innovation, and this by men who were constantly innovating upon the dearest and best rights of the people, crowning all by the present Bill; and this without one overt act to justify their charge. For his part, he looked upon it to be an equal calamity to a country where a struggle should take place, whether caused by the greedy attempts to increase power, or the mad ones to introduce anarchy and

confusion: If France exhibited to us a melancholy picture of the latter, we had also an awful warning to avoid the former, in the present state of affairs in Poland. The Noble Secretary of State had said, that the members of the Societies in question were low men, and that such men were generally the primary agents and instruments of treasonable plots and conspiracies; but let him and let the House recollect, that it was neither with Robespierre nor Barrere that the French revolution began; they would all recollect the virtuous Duke de Rochefoucault, and the part he took in the first stages of that transaction, and how far the revolutionary system had carried France from the wishes or thoughts of that Nobleman, at first was a subject of regret and abhorrence. He dwelt for a considerable time on the dangerous tendency and consequences of unnecessary innovation, either in producing anarchy or despotism, both of which, he contended, were equally destructive to the real liberties of mankind. He spoke pathetically of the sufferings of Poland and of France, from the revolutionary system, particularly the former, which must excite the sympathy and compassion of every free and generous people.

He came next to consider what had been said about the real intention of those Societies not being for a reform in Parliament, and quoted some passages from Mr. Burke's letter to his constituents at Bristol, in which that Gentleman emphatically says, "Other violations may injure the constitution, but the repeal of the *Habeas Corpus* Act actually dissolves the community;" almost in the same language, and precisely the same in substance as the arguments used in the papers of those Societies; but what might then be thought good and praiseworthy, from that grave, orthodox, political divine, at that time, ought now to be reckoned treason from those Societies.

He noticed the precedent of 1777, when the Bill then brought into Parliament, only affected a particular description of persons specified therein, and did not go a step further than the exigency of the case required. In the present instance, as all the mischief must come from the few hundreds who belong to those Societies and Clubs, the operation of the Bill ought only to extend to them; this would have been an effectual remedy, had their purpose been only to meet the real evil with an adequate remedy; but that could not have answered their other purposes of deluding the people as they had done all along, respecting the war; they never had been able to shew any reason why it was improper to treat or negotiate for a peace, and therefore it was necessary to keep a constant alarm in the minds of the people, and by addressing their passions, to lull their reason and reflection asleep. He remarked that

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two letters, one to the Society of the Friends of the People, and their answer, had been inserted in the Report; but the smallest notice of them had been studiously avoided by the Noble Secretary of State. The Friends of the People was a Society to which he and many of his friends had the honour to belong, which, though the Secretary of State had not mentioned, yet it was clearly the meaning of ministers, by placing the letters he had alluded to in the Report, indirectly to throw upon that Society some degree of obloquy, which they had no probability of proving that they merited: A Society which, he would say, had no disposition to imitate their apostacy, but would, as long as they were able, continue their endeavours to obtain by legal and constitutional means the important object for which they associated. He reprobated in very pointed terms the system pursued by ministers, as a system of revolutionary innovation, similar to the conduct pursued in France, and equally destructive; and he augured the worse from the sudden starts they were making from one innovation to another, upon flimsy pretexts, to answer the worst of purposes. He contended, that an open, bold, and manly conduct was best suited to the constitution of this country, and that ministers, by spreading false alarms and creating terror, had abandoned the example of our ancestors, and adopted what must lead to the disgrace and ruin of the country. He strenuously maintained, that the system of terror was that by which the rulers of the country had ruined France; instancing the overthrow of Brissot's party, of Herbert's, and of Danton's, the massacres of the 10th of August, and the death of the unfortunate King, as ascribable to the influence of terror artfully excited. He again mentioned the Alien Bill, Traiterous Correspondence Bill, and the whole of the system for the last two years, as proceeding from terror, being only conducted by creating such a fear in the people as misled them to believe those unconstitutional measures necessary.

Having concluded his arguments against the Bill, the Earl founded the motion he was about to make upon the 26th Standing Order of the House, which is, that no Bill can be read twice on the same day that it has been brought in; this, like every other standing order, cannot be dispensed with, unless by the unanimous concurrence of the House; if any Member move that a standing order be read, it cannot be dispensed with; this, coupled with the precedent in 1722, on this order, induced him to move, "That the House do now adjourn." He desired that the standing orders 29th and

104th might be read. The two standing orders were read accordingly.

Lord Grenville said, the precedent in 1722 was an answer to the Noble Lord's observation, for it was then stated, that it being objected to read the Bill a second time, the House, after a debate, came to an unanimous resolution to dispense with the standing order, and the Bill was read a second time.

The Earl of Lauderdale maintained, that the precedent was directly and decidedly in his favour, as it did not shew that the debate had been about dispensing with the standing order, but that, after a debate upon the second reading of the Bill, it had been unanimously agreed to dispense with the order.

The Earl of Abingdon said, that in the year 1777, that is, pending the American war, he voted, and single-handedly protested, against the Bill that was then brought forward for a suspension of that great bulwark of the constitution, the *Habeas Corpus* Act; in the year 1794, pending the present war with France, he should vote for its suspension, and would give the Bill, for this purpose, all the support in his power; and precisely on the same ground, and for the same reasons, that he voted against the other Bill: "For *that* war (said his Lordship) was a war upon our friends and fellow-subjects in America; whilst *this* is a war, as it were, with "*original sin*:" that is, with our ancient and ever-to-remain inveterate enemies; and not only *our* enemies, but the enemies of all mankind. Let me add, the enemies of God and nature." *That* was a war of *Cavaliers* against *Round Heads*, of *High Church* upon *Low Church*, which he then opposed: *This* is a war (by way of retaliation too) of *Round Heads* against *Cavaliers*, of *Low Church* upon *High Church*, in order to *No Church*: And this he now opposed, both being equally adverse to the tolerating spirit and the free constitution of this country. The principles, it is true, were the very converse of each other; but the motives of conduct in him were still the same, namely, to preserve the integrity of the British constitution. These were his reasons for the vote he should give, and to which he could add many others: But long speeches, like great books, were great evils, and if one reason will do, as *Hudibras* says, what need of two?

The Earl of Mansfield remarked on the obscurity of the persons who composed the Societies, as a circumstance that would render the success of their intentions more dreadful. He had much confidence in the good sense of the people of this country, and their attachment to the constitution; but the question for their Lordships to consider was, "Would they nip the seeds

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feeds of anarchy in the bud, or suffer them to ripen and be blown abroad by every wind? would they extinguish the flame on its first appearance, or only smother it, and thence suffer it hereafter to burst into a conflagration?" Under such circumstances as the present, it was not walls and towns, it was not fleets and armies, that constituted the defence of a nation, but the vigilance of the Executive Government. If we looked to the horrors which France presented to our view, was it terror that had occasioned the commission of the unexampled atrocities in that unhappy kingdom? Was it terror that provoked the murder of their Sovereign? Was it terror that had just instigated them to the murder of a Princess (Madame Elizabeth) who, to all the softer virtues of her sex, added patience and fortitude that would have done honour to the most heroic times? Our measures of precaution were not to be calculated on the probability of ultimate success, but on the magnitude of the evil with which we were threatened. Let their Lordships figure to themselves a Convention, such as the Societies proposed to assemble, usurping an authority paramount to that of Parliament. Happy, in such a case, would be the lot of that man, who should be the first to fall by the English guillotine, for he would have the consolation of knowing, that he fell with the liberties and constitution of his country. To their Lordships it would be irreparable ruin. Notwithstanding all that, in season or out of season, was asserted to the contrary, he still entertained a confident hope, that we should be able to restore order and government in France; but if we should not, and confusion should take place in this country, to whom could their Lordships apply for assistance or relief? To the Jacobins in France? Would they hope for the interposition of a French hand reeking with blood? The security of other Noble Lords was to him an additional ground of fear; for if they were all equally convinced of the danger, they would all be equally zealous to guard against it. On the charge against ministers, so often repeated, after the declarations of both Houses of Parliament to the contrary, that they had wantonly involved the country in a war, he should only observe, that persons once high in the esteem of those who made the charge, had claimed the exclusive merit. He put the case of his being charged with murder, and one of the jury who refused to find a verdict of Guilty, stepping forward and saying *Adsum qui feci*—here am I, Brissot, who made the war.

The *Earl of Caernarvon* said, that this subject, which lay in a narrow compass, had been so fully debated, that he would not add to the fatigue of the House at that late hour, by going
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over any of the grounds which had been already so ably treated; but he could not help making a few remarks on what a Noble Earl (Lauderdale) had said. He was very ready to agree with the Noble Earl that the subject was of the utmost importance, in whatever way it was considered. The danger to the constitution, which improvident neglect and temerity on the one side, or nervous and causeless alarm might produce on the other, was obvious to every man who had turned his thoughts to political reasoning. "The Noble Earl asserts, that those whom he qualifies with the name of alarmists, have already, from their groundless apprehensions, become the ignorant or willing instruments of increasing the power of the Crown at the expence of the liberty of the subject. It is as competent to me to assert, that the Noble Earl, and those few who with him have marked a contempt of the danger to which the constitution is at this time exposed, have by their blind temerity, unwillingly perhaps, fomented and encouraged the evil designs of the disaffected, till the mischief has arrived at such a height, as to require the temporary suspension of some of the protecting laws of the land. Which of these assertions is the best founded in fact, a short time may possibly shew. It is not, certainly, to unsupported statements of imaginary dangers that the best barrier against despotism is to be surrendered; nor, on the other hand, is liberty to be betrayed into insecurity, and consequent ruin, by high-flown panegyrics on its own merits; or by the delusive praises of equality and the rights of man. The question before us is simple and clear; it amounts to this, Whether the temporary suspension of the operation of part of the *Habeas Corpus* Act can be justified at any time upon any emergency? If it can, Whether the dangers of the present moment are of a nature and magnitude to authorise the present measure? I did not expect to hear any doubt respecting the first part of this proposition; but by the Noble Earl's argument, I think he denies that any circumstances of the country would justify it. The Noble Earl seems to dissent from this statement of his opinion. I did not, indeed, imagine it could be his real opinion, though his argument seemed to lead very nearly to that extent; for he has blended his objections to the present measures with his objections to the Alien Bill, and to those other measures of necessary precaution which the singular exigencies of the present times have produced; as if this measure could not be justified on the simple consideration of its own specific case, without reference to the other measures alluded to; as if a certain *quantum* of the law of the land might be suspended in times of difficulty, which, if expended in the Alien Bill, would

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leave no supply for further provisions of that nature on the present emergency. In this way of arguing, it would certainly be difficult to prove that any specific circumstances could of themselves, at any time, justify the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act. Every emergency, however, certainly must have its separate consideration, and its separate remedy. The Alien Bill had its necessity, which induced Parliament to that measure; the present measure must be justified on its own distinct grounds. The Noble Earl, with all the vehemence of his feeling, and ingenuity of his understanding, labours to prove, that there are no existing circumstances of sufficient importance to justify this measure; in his opinion, neither the Report of the Commons, nor that from your Lordships' Committee, furnish any thing sufficiently defined to ground the suspicion of a dangerous conspiracy; nothing which the common provisions of law could not controul. He argues also, that most of the papers have long ago appeared publicly in newspapers and hand-bills; and he observes, that if they really had contained all the dangerous matter imputed to them, ministers were criminally supine not to apply for this increase of power sooner. Certainly if the present measure was only to facilitate the punishment of the seditious matter in any of these papers, this measure would not be necessary; the common law would be sufficient to bring the authors to speedy trial, and exemplary punishment; but the increased boldness of these Societies, their increased numbers, and their manifest designs, make it necessary to guard against the treasonable effects of these libels: It is against the treasonable acts springing from these libels that this measure is directed. The Noble Earl amplifies the value of the sacrifice required, and depreciates the danger as trifling or imaginary. That the *Habeas Corpus* Act is the most valuable hold which liberty possesses is admitted on all hands, and that it ought not on slight occasions to be dispensed with. I am willing to go farther (and that will make the distinction between former proposed reforms of Parliament, and any now talked of, as a pretence for a revolution in the form of government), and I assert, that no constitution is safe and free, unless, in its ordinary state of health and vigour, great latitude is given even to the wild range and fancy of reforming projectors, because some good may result from it, and the evils flowing from the intemperance of individual zeal in common circumstances, may be with safety left to the usual provisions which law, circumscribed by the jealous spirit of liberty, has formed; but in *difficult and suspicious times* the secret enemies to the constitution of the country ought not to be suffered to collect and ripen

ripen their poison under the warmth and protection of that liberty they mean to destroy: On this principle alone have all the former instances of this measure been founded. The Noble Earl says, that the former instances have no resemblance to the present; and he seems to think the instances of the year 1715, and at other periods, were more justifiable, because they were in times of open rebellion. The Noble Earl's usual logic does not support him in this observation; a secret conspiracy having broken out into an open rebellion, could never be an additional reason for employing a power applicable only to secret enemies; it is not with the artillery of such an Act of Parliament that he would meet an open enemy in the field; it is only calculated to operate against enemies who conceal themselves, of which you have necessarily fewer when one-half are in open war, and out of the reach of such an Act. If all had taken arms, you would have none to apply it to. The eve of a rebellion is, therefore, the time when such a power must necessarily have its most effectual operation; it is lurking conspiracies of proved existence and danger, but of unknown resources and undefined extent, that call for this remedy, without which the flame might increase gradually under the cover and protection of law, until it burst forth with irresistible fury. The Noble Earl behind me (Earl Stanhope) has told us in some of his political cautions, that the revolution of France was the event of a moment; it is true, it was so; and the negligence of the government of any country, in suffering conspiracies to gain strength, and seduce the people under false pretences, will produce the same catastrophe. A conspiracy clearly proved need not be traced distinctly through all its branches and ramifications; its existence, and the danger to the state from its nature, are sufficient to justify the temporary suspension of that security for our liberty, which by law is our birth-right. But even during that suspension, Parliament leaves responsibility attached to the discretionary power which it entrusts to ministers, and remains herself the watchful and jealous avenger of any injustice; nor is any individual deprived of his remedy at law for any wanton encroachment on his liberty. That there are sufficient grounds to apprehend great danger from lurking conspiracies in the present moment, has been so fully and unanswerably proved by the Noble Secretary of State, from the documents contained in the Reports, that it would be useless to go over the same ground; but I will venture to rest the proof of danger short of those arguments, and trust to the statement and observations of the Noble Lords who oppose this measure. They admit numerous Societies to exist, corresponding with each other,

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other, canvassing for increase of numbers, complaining of the government of the country in all its branches, professing no expectation of any redress from the Government which they complain of, and professing that they shall never apply either to the Legislature or the Executive Power for redress, but shall depend upon themselves, and for that purpose shall summon a Convention of all the People. All this some Noble Lords state as legal; they will, however, scarcely deny that they could not go much farther within the bounds of legality; and if they should take the Noble Earl's (Stanhope's) advice (I do not mean to say that he regularly recommended such plan, when he told them, that nothing was wanting but pikes and resolution to give the people their amplest wishes); if, I say, these Societies should make use of this hint, it would be difficult to maintain the assertion, that the constitution of the country was in no danger. When the Government was brought, by these Societies spreading discontent where it did not previously exist, into so critical a situation, that the secret distribution of arms would put the constitution of the country at their mercy, I should think it was time to take vigorous measures, to prevent the dangers which threatened. If, under these circumstances, the hands of Government ought to be strengthened, how much more must it appear necessary, when the clearest hostility to the constitution is marked in all the proceedings of these Societies, and when they have anticipated the hint of the Noble Earl, and begun to collect and secretly distribute arms? I therefore feel the necessity of surrendering for a time a portion of the security for my liberty, in order to enable the ministers of the country more effectually to deal with those who mean to overturn it."

The Earl of Derby argued against the motion for reading the Bill a second time; and, in favour of the question of adjournment, said, it had never been contended that no case could exist which would justify the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act, as the Noble Earl who spoke last had supposed; but only that a case had not been made out in the present instance which would justify such an encroachment on the rights of the subject. The Noble Earl seemed to think, that the less the danger the stronger must be the measure of precaution; let him recollect to what an absurd extreme such an argument might be carried. If so, every fence of the constitution might be broken down, and should the fortunate period ever arrive when there was no danger whatever, not an atom of it would be left. The news of the day from France had been alluded to—He could not treat of that melancholy event in terms of equal eloquence with the Noble Earl in the green ribband;

but no man could more regret than he did the degradation which human nature suffered by such acts, but he could not see how the mention of them had any relation to the question in debate. A Noble and Learned Lord (Thurlow) had said, that all the facts stated in the Report were highly seditious, but did not amount to treason. If they were only seditious, was not the ordinary power of law sufficient to punish and repress them? The persons charged with those acts were now in custody; where was then the necessity of new powers to bring them to justice, or to prevent them from doing future mischief? This surely was a proof that the danger, whatever it might have been, was now at an end. The Noble Secretary of State, for the benefit of his argument, had dwelt on the numbers assembled at Chalk Farm. Did he mean to say, that all the persons who happened to be present were implicated in the purposes of the meeting? He could not but know that in the neighbourhood of London, a very few persons would soon collect a mob of several hundreds, and sometimes thousands, merely, from motives of curiosity, to see what was going forward. That the Societies were preparing to distribute arms, was stated even in the Report as a mere presumption, unsupported by any shadow of proof. For these reasons, he deprecated a measure which he considered as called for by no adequate cause, and as an attack upon the constitution. His inquiries had fully satisfied his mind upon the subject, and whether he acted with the majority or the minority, with ten or with twenty, it was the same to his conscience. He feared no calumny, for he defied any man to quote an action of his life that was hostile to the system of liberty protected by law, under which we enjoyed so many blessings.

The Earl of Carlisle said, the Learned Lord (Thurlow) had gone no farther than to say, that the facts stated in the Report were seditious in the highest degree; but whether they amounted to treason or not, he had expressly declined to explain, on the laudable principle, that as persons were committed for treason, it would be cruel to agitate that matter till after their cases were decided upon by a jury. He entered into the reasons that had induced him to give his poor support to ministers, and reminded their Lordships of the small beginnings from which very important events had arisen, particularly calling to their recollection Lord George Gordon's mobs, which, though objects of ridicule at first, had grown to such a serious height, as actually to awe the Legislature, and subvert government for a week. The Earl defended the Bill, as essential to the safety of the constitution.

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Marquis Townshend said, that in his opinion it was safer, in a moment of emergency like the present, to confide powers in the Executive Government, than to leave it to individuals to take measures for their own security. If Administration did not take care effectually to protect the property of the Public, they must, on principles of self-preservation, endeavour to protect it themselves, and the mischievous effect might be a civil war. Government, however, ought to be, and in his opinion they were, responsible for the use which they made of these powers. On this view he acquiesced in the present measure, which he considered as justified by urgent necessity, and well adapted to avert the danger in question.

The Marquis of Lansdown began with observing, that it was the practice of all wise men to examine their measures by the rule of reason; and he recommended it to their Lordships to examine the question of adjournment by that test. If ever a standing order deserved to be made into a law, it was that order which had been read, which regulated the course of their proceedings, and gave to the people time to see and consider of the measures passing through the House, so as to enable them to come forward and assist Parliament with their advice. What possible inconvenience could there be in the delay of a day? Suppose that the City of London should come up with a petition to their bar, would it not be for the interest of the kingdom that they should have the opinion of that respectable body? or would it have a good appearance with the Public, when it was known that the City of London meant to meet in order to discuss the measure, that they should, by a hasty and premature decision of their Lordships, preclude the City from delivering their opinion on the important measure in question? Ministers might perhaps wish to get rid of such opinion, as it was suspected not to be so favourable to their views as it was last year, for they did not, he believed, stand equally well with the City; but surely Parliament ought, from considerations of prudence, as well as regard to their own dignity, to deliberate on a measure of such importance, and not to debar the people from presenting their petitions against it.—There could be no cause for precipitation. The principal persons engaged in the terrible conspiracy, he supposed were already taken up. They could not escape; and there had been no tumult on the occasion; no attempt had been made to rescue them; no *Habeas Corpus* ever had been moved for in their behalf, and there was no appearance in any part of the country to justify the haste of their proceeding.—They should examine the precedents which were brought forward as grounds for the present measure by reason; and he would venture to say that there was not one

which would be found to justify the act by being in point. He wished to know if any rational man could point out any distinction between these Societies, and those which met for the purpose of Parliamentary Reform in the years 1778 and 1782? yet upon the proceedings of those Societies the Executive Power never expressed the smallest apprehension, or took any measures to suppress them. Why was not the measure adopted in the last year, when an insurrection was so much apprehended? No such measure was even suggested; and the reason was obvious, because the People were not wound up to the proper pitch for receiving such a measure. It was ridiculous to say that there was a precedent in this reign and in that reign, because in this or that the *Habeas Corpus* Act had been suspended. As far as precedent went, he contended, that the Noble Lords had completely failed; for all they had shewn by the precedents quoted was, that such measures had been formerly adopted, but shewed not the least similarity between the circumstances under which such a measure had been formerly adopted, and the circumstances which they say call for it now. Upon the same principle they might prove the present disastrous war just and necessary: Because wars have been undertaken which were just and necessary, they have nothing more to do than omit all comparison of the grounds upon which they have been undertaken. Such a precedent could not be adduced. There was always heretofore a dire and urgent necessity proved, either of rebellion, insurrection, or of such real absolute necessity, as was made manifest to the minds of all men. Was this the case here? No such thing. No cause had been stated to justify the measure; and a Noble and Learned Lord had wisely said, that to strengthen the magistracy was all that the circumstances of the country seemed to require.

It had been said that revolutions always sprung from the people, as an argument for alarm at the present inconsiderable persons being engaged in reforms. In his mind the very contrary was the fact. Our Revolution was brought about by a few men of superior sense and understandings, who saw that the thing was absolutely necessary, and effected it against the general opinion—and even in France it was by reading men—by men of rank and condition, that the Revolution was begun—by men who saw and felt the oppressions of the Government—of that Government who, indulging terrors, had gone to most extraordinary lengths of irritation. Was the present measure either just or political? As to its justice, it had not at least been made manifest. Committees had been appointed in both Houses, and though he had a great personal regard for most of the Members of each, it was obvious and undeniable that

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that both were composed of alarmers and alarmists. In former Committees, impartial men had been placed; here they were all of one description, and their Report was full of capital inaccuracies. It gave no information what the law could do—how far it could go to correct the existing evil; nor did it prove to the satisfaction of any thinking man any real cause for such a measure. It talked of Societies; he was ignorant of the Societies; he knew nothing of them; but he looked at them with an eye of favour, as they seemed to be only sincerely desirous of obtaining a beneficial end, namely, a Reform in Parliament. They fought the same object as the Society that met at the Thatched House in 1782, and if any reproach attached to the one body, the same, or even greater, attached to the other, as the beginners. But what was the fact? The old Jacobins were persecuting the new. There was a vulgar proverb, which precisely described the parties, and applied to them; but he would not offend their Lordships' ears by starting so coarse an adage. The purport of it was, that one set of men were best to catch another. A smuggler was the best man to set to catch smugglers. He would know all their tricks. He would suspect their practices by a consciousness of what he would have practised himself, if he had not been admitted into a snug birth in the Customs—but though he was a proper person to catch his old companions, would you invest him with powers to attack and ruin the fair trader? As to its policy, if it was the general opinion of the country that there should be a reform, do what they would to prevent it, sooner or later it would be irresistible. If their grievances were real, they ought to be redressed; and that they had real grievances was certain, for the Commissioners of Accounts, appointed by Parliament itself, had reported on the enormous sinecures, expences, and burthensome offices of Government. They had complained of barracks, and surely there had been a time since the Revolution when the erection of barracks would have given universal alarm and uneasiness to the country. It was not politic, nor was it wise, to push men upon these subjects. They would grow desperate if ministers should thus go on step by step in encroaching upon their liberties. And what was the benefit to be expected? That there should be no meetings for the discussion of popular subjects. Was that a state of society to be wished for? Was it wise to break the spirit, destroy the vigilance, and allay in the breasts of the people all zeal for the constitution? Emigrations had been too frequent of late; not merely of people, but of wealth, industry, and talents. They would not diminish under such measures. He could not discover any distinction between the Societies of which these alarmists were active members, and the Societies which are
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made the subject of the present debate; their professed object being the same. The present crisis, and the present war, were without any precedent in history. The discontents of the people arose from the timidity of the ministers; and from what was consequent on that timidity, their ill-judged violence and oppression. What was, he emphatically asked, to be the end of the present business? Was it meant to prevent any remonstrance against the present war? Were ministers to silence the people until they had no longer men or money to carry it on? Were they to continue it until this country, bleeding within and without at every pore, was completely exhausted? A law against Conventions, as in Ireland, though a harsh measure, might be considered as mere milk and water to this; and seeing it in this view, he believed that ministers had other and far different from their professed objects in their contemplation. They wanted to train up herds of informers, as was done in the reign of Charles II. and even in that of King William and Mary, by whom men of another description from those now in gaol were to be attacked. What Bishop Burnet said of the informers and forgers of those times, when the hands of Peers were so dexterously imitated as to elude their own detection when shewn them in that House, ought to make them cautious of a measure that might generate the same tribe. They ought not, upon mere school language, to give up the great security of British freemen. For himself, he entered a solemn protest against the measure, and as he might not be present again, against any further measure they might attempt of a similar kind. He deprecated the delusions they were holding out; they knew well whether there were arms hoarded up in the country. No quantity of arms could be procured without their knowledge. The trade would know of orders to any extent; and they were so connected with the trade, that they had nothing to do but to send up for two or three of the principal masters to have immediate information. As to new-fashioned arms, and the dramatic representations of pulling out daggers from under their cloaks, it was too contemptible a manœuvre for the good sense of the country. He advised them to go upon a broader ground of wisdom, and upon a larger line of policy, if they meant to extricate the country from the dreadful abyss into which they had plunged it. The motion of adjournment was, he contended, on the present occasion, a motion of the greatest propriety; nor did he conceive how their Lordships could refuse their assent to it, without an open violation of their own rules and orders.

The Duke of Leeds began his speech with reading the following quotation from an anonymous author (one of the writers of *Sir Robert Walpole*), on the measure in the year

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1722: " Since persons of fortune and consideration can at this time of day think it worth their while to assist the interests of our late desperate traitors, by affecting a most unreasonable and ill-timed concern for the liberties of their country, I, who have no advantages to expect from public confusions, need make no apology for appearing on the other side of the argument, and endeavouring to prove that the present measures of the Administration are our only security against all those mischievous disorders in which the madness of disappointed rebels, and the wild spleen of our modern patriots, would involve us*." Speaking of the present measure, the Duke said he had heard very little in the shape of argument against it; it most certainly was a serious one, and would be criminal but for the dire and urgent necessity on which it was founded. His Grace owned himself an alarmist of a long date; ever since the month of November 1792. From what he saw then, and what he had since seen, he entertained a considerable degree of apprehension; inasmuch as he was convinced that if they did not arm Government with large and sufficient powers, they would not long have any *Habeas Corpus Act* either to maintain or suspend.

The Lord Chancellor said, he should not have occasion to go at much length into the question, as it had been so ably explained and discussed by other Lords, especially by the Noble and Learned Lord who spoke early in the debate. He would speak first as to the form and course of their proceedings. The precedent of 1722 was perfectly in point, only that so much pains had not been taken at that period in giving to the House full information on the subject; whereas in the measure of the present day, whatever objection might be made to the measure itself, it could not be alleged that it had not been fully discussed—a great deal of extraneous matter had been introduced, but on the real point at issue there had been but little argument. After clearing away a vulgar error, that it was a suspension of the *Habeas Corpus Act*, and that no action would lie for false imprisonment, that it was a full indemnity to ministers for all acts, and gave them the power of *Lettres de Cachet*, and that it was a Revolutionary measure, which had been so ably and so clearly done by the Noble and Learned Lord to whom he had before alluded; there had been no contest about the principle. It had been admitted, that if there were a Convention, or a Meeting, called by any other name (for the name of the assembly did not constitute the crime), which aimed at giving laws to Parliament and the

* The above extract appeared first in the Supplement to the St. James's Journal of Monday, October 15, 1722, and is reprinted in Beyer's Political State, for the same month, vol. xxiv. p. 397.

Country, this measure would have been wise and salutary. The only difference then between them was about the fact—whether these Societies did really aim so to give laws to the country, or merely meant to obtain a Parliamentary Reform by legal and constitutional means. To prove that in his mind they meant nothing so little as a Parliamentary Reform (which he contended was tried more than once, and settled and extinguished in 1781 and 1782), he went over the documents in the Report, reading extracts to prove that the object of the Societies was a Reform of Government, and something infinitely beyond a Reform of Parliament, declaring that the assertion that their object was a Parliamentary Reform, no more legalized the meeting, than *God save the King* written at the bottom of a seditious libel, could purge it of its libellous tendency. He observed, that these Societies originated at one of the worst periods of the French Revolution—described the late British Convention in Edinburgh, before it was crushed by the vigour of the Magistrates, which was altogether on the French model, with their primary assemblies, their delegates, their President, their bell, their term of Citizens, &c. &c. all which had obviously the French Convention in view in their proceedings. Their numbers he could not ascertain. They probably exaggerated their number themselves. He did not think them so numerous as they pretended, but they were at least tenfold the number of those who began the riots in 1780. His Lordship commented on the reasoning built on the low rank of the members, their little power to do mischief, &c. &c. and said, it was easy to treat as imaginary all dangers that were checked in the bud. One of the finest poets had said,

“Treasons are never own’d when but deserv’d;
“Successful crimes alone are justify’d.”

He concluded, therefore, with saying that he had no doubt but the House would see the necessity of placing the confidence in ministers which this Bill designed, and that it was a seasonable measure of precaution to guard all that was sacred in the country from almost immediate danger.

The House divided on the question of adjournment:

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It was moved that the Bill be read a second time.

The Earl of Lauderdale expressed his hope that at so late an hour (past two o’clock in the morning) they would not

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push this question any further. It had been stated that they might probably receive a petition to-morrow. The standing order against reading a Bill twice on one day was not unknown to the people; what must not that House sacrifice in character and in opinion if they violated their own standing orders, in so marked a way, obviously to prevent the people from exercising their right of petitioning? Surely they would do more injury than they could obtain good by the hurry! The Noble and Learned Lord on the woolsack had said that the question of Parliamentary Reform was finally settled and put to sleep in 1782. He denied the fact. He was sure the Duke of Richmond would deny the fact. Mr. Wyvill would deny it. It was impossible to believe that the men whom ministers had sent to the Tower could have entertained the absurd hope of overturning the Government, at a time when Government was so remarkably strong. There were among them some men of as brilliant abilities as any men now living (and he wished that they had always directed their abilities to good ends)—they at least could not be suspected of the folly of a scheme so ridiculous and romantic. The Noble and Learned Lord had said, that this would not prevent an action for false imprisonment. He knew that in 1715 it was understood that it did give complete indemnity to the Privy Council for all commitments—and he feared that this would be found to do the same. He conjured them therefore to go no further for that night at least.

The question was put, "That the Bill be now read a second time," and carried in the affirmative.

It was then moved, "That the Bill be committed," which being carried, the House went into a Committee of the whole House, the *Earl of Cathcart* in the chair, and went through the Bill.

The House being resumed, Lord Cathcart reported that they had gone through the Bill without amendments.

Earl Stanhope then moved, "That the House do adjourn;" and the question being put, it was negatived.

It was then moved, "That the Bill be now read a third time," and the House divided:

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Majority 85

It was then moved, "That the Bill do pass."—Ordered.

"That a message be sent to the House of Commons, acquainting them therewith."—Ordered.

Adjourned at past THREE in the morning.

PROTESTS

Against the Bill for suspending the Habeas Corpus Act.

Die Jovis, 22do Maii 1794.

Moved, That the Bill, intituled, " An Act to impower his Majesty to secure and detain such Persons as his Majesty shall suspect are conspiring against his Person and Government," be read a first time,

The question was put thereupon.

It was resolved in the affirmative.

Then the said Bill was read the first time.

DISSENTIENT,

Because I abhor the idea of establishing a dangerous and unconstitutional system of *Letters of Cachet* in this country.

STANHOPE.

Die Jovis, 22do Maii 1794.

Moved, " That the Habeas Corpus Suspension Bill be read the third time "

Read accordingly.

The question was put, " Whether this Bill shall pass ? "

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Not-contents - 7

Resolved in the affirmative.

DISSENTIENT,

Ist, Because no evidence has been laid before us, that this kingdom is at present in those circumstances of imminent danger and imperious necessity which alone, in our opinion, would justify even the temporary surrender of that sacred fundamental law which is the sole guardian of the personal liberty and security of our fellow-subjects. None of those circumstances, either of foreign invasion or of domestic insurrection, or of formidable conspiracy, now exist which induced our ancestors to commit their liberties to the perilous guardianship of a despotical authority. Instead of such an unequivocal public danger, which silences all deliberations and over-rules all laws, we are now required to vest an arbitrary power in his Majesty's ministers upon the authority of a detail of the offences of individuals or societies, whose strength and numbers are not proved to our apprehension to be such as would justify such a measure as the present, especially as the ordinary operation of the law is sufficient to check the spirit which is supposed to prevail.

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prevail. One of the worst effects of the conduct of these Societies is their having operated as the instrument for former artificial panics, and as a pretext for former measures, in our opinion the most hazardous and pernicious. They continued the same conduct without injury experienced by the Public, without accession of strength, without the proof of any change in their systems or designs. We cannot, therefore, without betraying the trust reposed in us, consent to resign the liberties of all our fellow-subjects to the discretion of the servants of the Crown, on no better ground than that of a catalogue of offences which have been long notorious to the whole kingdom.

2dly, Because even the proof that some individuals entertained those desperate designs which have been ascribed to them would not, in our opinion, form any justification of the present measure. From the Revolution to the complete defeat of the pretensions of the House of Stuart, the wisdom of our ancestors did not deem the existence of a zealous, powerful, and indefatigable Jacobite party a sufficient reason, without overt acts of rebellion, or actual existing conspiracy, for subjecting the personal liberty of the whole kingdom to the will of ministers. Miserable indeed, and precarious is our condition, if, at the pleasure of a handful of visionaries and incendiaries (characters which every age produces, and disguises which the agents of every Government may assume), our liberties are to be laid under a legal interdict, and ministers are to be vested with an arbitrary power over the persons of all the freemen of this realm.

3dly, Because, even if the danger had been as real and imminent as is pretended, it might have been provided against by measures far less odious than that of depriving the subject of those rights of personal security which distinguish the British constitution beyond any other free government ancient or modern, and changing it for the time from a government of law to a government of will. One expedient, comparatively more moderate, is obvious, namely, to put the law respecting bail for misdemeanours which affect the state for a limited time on the same footing with bail in cases of treason.

4thly, Because this Bill appears to us under a still more melancholy and alarming aspect when we combine it with declarations which have been made by considerable persons during the dependence of this Bill. Even this, the utmost extremity to which our ancestors were ever driven, by the pressure of the greatest danger, is but the prelude to a system

of measures (if possible) still more violent and arbitrary. These menaces too forcibly illustrated by some past measures, in our opinion of a rigour equally impolitic and odious, fill us with the most melancholy apprehensions that designs are entertained, by a progressive series of encroachments, to annihilate all the rights of Englishmen, and to extinguish all the free principles of the British constitution.

5thly, Because the precipitation with which this Bill has been hurried through the House is both indecent in itself, and directly repugnant to two standing orders of this House; one of the 28th of June 1715, and the other of the 28th of April 1699; standing orders, which insure to this House the advantages of mature deliberation, and to the subject the invaluable privilege of petitioning against measures, which, like the present, are subversive of his fundamental rights.

ALBEMARLE, BEDFORD,
LAUDERDALE, DERBY.

The following Noble Peers were the minority, in the division on Thursday, against the Bill for suspending the *Habeas Corpus Act*:

The Duke of Bedford
Marquis of Lansdown
Earl of Derby
Earl of Lauderdale
Earl of Albemarle

Earl Stanhope
Earl of Egmont
Earl of Thanet
Lord St. John

PROXIES.

Duke of Grafton

Lord Chedworth

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, May 22.

The Newspaper Stamp, Land Revenue, and the French Islands Corn Bill, were read a third time, and passed.

A new writ was ordered for Huntingdonshire, *vice Mr. Brown*, appointed Steward of the Chiltern Hundreds.

Received a message from the Lords, that their Lordships had referred the books and papers presented by the House of Commons to a Secret Committee, and that the said Committee was empowered to receive communications from the Committee of the Commons.

Mr. Welbore Ellis moved, "That it be an instruction to the Committee of this House, to communicate with the Committee appointed by the Lords." Ordered.

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The House in a Committee went through the Insolvent Debtors Bill, when several new clauses were introduced.
Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, May 23.

The Royal Assent was given, by Commission, to thirty public and fifty private Bills; among the former was the Bill for suspending the *Habeas Corpus* Act.

AMERICA.

The Marquis of Lansdown gave notice that it was his intention to make a motion on the affairs of America, as relatively connected with the interests of Great Britain, on Monday the 26th, and moved, That the House be summoned for that purpose.

The motion was agreed to, and the House ordered to be summoned accordingly.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, May 23.

The House in a Committee went through the Slave Carrying and Penitentiary House Bills.

The Mariners, Corse Inclosure, and Bristol Burial Ground Bills, were read a third time and passed.

TRIAL OF MR. HASTINGS.

Received a message from the Lords, that they would proceed further on the Impeachment on Tuesday the 27th.

Mr. Burke said, that in times like these it was certainly necessary to support every part of the constitution in its full privileges. He had heard a matter which he would state to the House, and then leave to them to say, what ought to be the proper measures to be taken, if they should resolve to take any. The case was thus: A grave person in another House had complained, that a pamphlet, purporting to be a Report of the Committee appointed by the Commons for inquiring into the causes of the delay in the Impeachment, contained libellous matter against the Judges of England.

Mr. Burke said, the Reports of that House had been irregularly published for upwards of thirty years. Sometimes, it was true, they were not a faithful record of their proceedings, but

but sometimes they were. In this case, though it was intended to attack the bookseller, yet the Managers were indirectly aimed at; and feeling, as he did, the constitutional ground upon which they had acted, he was ready to meet all the learning and wisdom that could be brought to attack them, and the sooner the better.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY, May 26.

AMERICA, AND COPY OF INSTRUCTIONS TO LORD DORCHESTER.

The Marquis of Lansdown prefaced his motion by observing that it had not been his intention to trouble their Lordships again this session, and he had indeed arranged matters for going out of town that day. That intention, however, he found it his duty to dispense with, though perhaps his silence or secession might have been expected. And, indeed, though he had himself not the smallest desire to secede or abandon his duty in any instance, he wondered not that such an idea should be entertained, considering what little effect all the arguments used by Noble Lords, who thought as he did, had produced. He had observed their Lordships with equal surprise and gratitude, listening with great patience to long speeches; and the more, as the event generally proved that their minds were pretty well made up before-hand, upon the subjects in discussion. He felt himself particularly obliged to them for their repeated attention, having found it necessary to trouble them so often of late. He never, however, had taken the liberty to intrude upon them, but when he thought he could add some new matter to the argument, or throw some new light on the subject in question. For his present intrusion he had only to say, that he wished not to let the session slip without once more calling the attention of their Lordships to the state of affairs at home and abroad. Ministers at home were holding out unexampled severity to persons supposed to be guilty of certain plots and treasons. A strange idea had been held out, that new and unheard-of weapons were to be made use of to massacre their Lordships. They were not, as of old, to be blown up by a gunpowder-plot, but to be hacked, hashed to pieces, and hewed with pikes, and God knew what. At a former period he had taken the liberty of directing the attention of their Lordships to the neutral nations, and had predicted a variety of circumstances relative to the impropriety of the

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the war, and the situation of this country, which, though at that time treated with light and inconsiderate regard, he was sorry to experience, had unfortunately proved to be too fatal and too true. To the same objects, in some degree, he was reduced again to recur, by the extraordinary and impolitic systems we had so delusively adopted. Previous to the discussion of the particular subject of his motion, he had begged leave to request the patience of their Lordships to some observations which might be said to be connected with it; therefore, he had said what he had already stated; and he must still further declare, that the unqualified severity pursuing by Administration, was in his mind not only wrong in itself, but big with serious danger to the country from its probable consequences. He conceived, that the real object of Administration should be ascertained, before their Lordships should submit to those trials which the ministers wished to carry into effect. With respect to the country, he was far from stating that it did not require some measures to insure a continuance of the public tranquillity, and the best means of effecting it would be by some mild, temperate, and necessary reform, which would, he was persuaded, tranquilize the public mind, and prevent those harsh and strong measures which ministers had injudiciously adopted. To preserve peace and the public security, he would recommend, as most wanting and most essential, a reform in the municipal government: He wished to see the different corporations consist of independent gentlemen, capable of supporting their dignity, and acting with justice in their respective situations. He would wish to see the magistrates men of character, and independent of ministers. On the present occasion, the Marquis said, he did not much admire observing his Majesty's Attorney and Solicitor Generals employed as they were at present; for a few days since he sent his agent to consult them on particular business, but the answer he received was, that they could not be consulted, as they were then occupied in taking the examinations of persons suspected of treasonable and seditious practices. He conceived that the present alarm was a libel on the character of Englishmen; for every foreign minister with whom he had ever conversed, was warm in his panegyrics of the people of England, whom they pronounced the most peaceable, and least blood-thirsty, of any people on the surface of the globe. He was surprised and astonished when he had heard that the great officers of state were employed in inspecting instruments of cruelty, calculated for the purposes of assassination. It was, in his opinion, a scandalous abuse of time, which might be much more respectably

spectably employed by ministers, and with infinitely more advantage to the Public.

On the subject of foreign affairs, the Marquis reminded their Lordships that he had, at the commencement of the session, ventured to state his opinion to their Lordships; and nothing had occurred since, but what had served to confirm him in his former sentiments, and to present in a more forcible and striking point of view the calamitous prospect of affairs, in Flanders especially. There were none of their Lordships who could remain blind to that situation. It was publicly known, and publicly spoken of; and nothing could appear invidious in dwelling on a topic that must necessarily and ought to be deeply impressed on the minds of their Lordships. We were engaged in a most disastrous war—a war of six Kings against a single oppressed People, who were fighting for their opinions. A victory had that day been talked of, and that 12,000 men were slain. He must be a hard-hearted man, who did not deeply lament a war pregnant with the spilling of such oceans of human blood: But we had experienced disgrace and defeat enough, to balance against a temporary advantage. Who was there, that had not been acquainted with the loss of our artillery? Who was there, that did not contemplate with horror the immense effusion of human blood? It was well known that the allies were not disposed to continue the war; and the number of sick since the commencement of the present campaign, which was little more than SIX WEEKS, exceeded in number the whole amount of the sick during the whole of THE LAST YEAR! He said it was in vain that ministers published partial Gazettes, or attempted to deceive the people. Every post came charged with horrible conviction. Of what service was it that our public accounts magnified each casual advantage, or diminished every defeat? Was it not known, universally known, that the losses of our allies were concealed, while our display of our successes was made with every ornament that ingenuity could bestow? Did not every private letter confute these accounts? Had not what he had just mentioned been made a common topic, *viz.* that we had lost more men during the two first months of the present campaign than in all the preceding one?

The Low Countries were again in extreme danger; the inhabitants openly condemned the war, and proclaimed their wishes for the enemy. The hospitals were loaded with sick and wounded; commerce was stagnate; and our good friends the Dutch murmured at our conquests in the West. They pretended to discover the cause of our engagement, and our

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perseverance in the league, and complained that we had secretly and exclusively gained possession of the French Atlantic colonies, to monopolize the sugar trade, to the severe injury of every other European State.

If the desperate situation of Italy were looked at with regard to France, there we should also find a people who reproached our perseverance in the present rash and impolitic hostilities. It was the same with respect to Spain; and he asked ministers, if there were other events necessary to soften their hard hearts, besides the spilling the blood of 12,000 men, as asserted in their last dispatches from Flanders? These were horrid circumstances to relate, or to reflect on; and the more so, when it must be confessed, that we were not the nearer our object.

Speaking of the astonishing multitudes of French who came forward in their armies after a successful contest on the part of the allies, attended with great slaughter of the enemy, the Marquis said, that circumstance alone might teach us, how utterly impracticable the war was with any hope of ultimate success; and he could not better illustrate his assertion, than by reminding their Lordships of a conversation stated to have taken place between a Chinese and Russian minister, when Russia was at war with the Chinese. The Russian boasted, that with 1000 men his Court could beat a Chinese army consisting of 15,000. You may, said the Chinese, but if you bring 2000 men into the field, we shall bring 30,000, and so on in proportionate accumulation of immense armies, till you are wearied and worn out. This doctrine applied, he said, somewhat closely to the present war, and might be carried to the extent menaced by the Chinese, to the awful destruction of the human race. In a war, therefore, attended with so much cruelty as the present war was, and with such a waste of men and money, it behoved ministers to reflect deliberately, and with great care, on circumstances, before they had the madness of increasing its difficulty, and adding to its danger, by provoking a new enemy to enter the field against us. He had, he said, great apprehensions with regard to neutral nations. Our conduct towards them as it heretofore had shewn itself, had been most unjustifiable, particularly to Genoa and Turin, Sweden and Denmark. What had been stated respecting the conduct of the British Court towards Tuscany, a Noble Lord (Auckland) could, he trusted, completely confute. He wished the Noble Lord would condescend to state whether there was an article in the treaty, signed by him in his official capacity, and the Grand Duke, that had not been laid before their Lordships: An article,

ticle, which not only insisted on that Prince banishing emigrants from his country, but such of his own subjects as the British Court thought proper arbitrarily to proscribe. He wished to have this circumstance disavowed; and, therefore, he gave his Lordship an opportunity of explaining or disclaiming the assertion. By our harsh conduct we had forced Sweden and Denmark into a treaty, which might produce the most serious consequences to this country. He declared, he felt with concern the opportunity ministers afforded their enemies of rejoicing and exulting over their failures at Corsica; the loss of shipping, destroyed in a manner unheard of before, from whatever negligence it might have proceeded, was a lamentable circumstance; and our failures in that quarter were looked upon, not only by our enemies, but many of our allies, as a disgrace.

These being the striking circumstances of the war, common sense would have supposed that ministers would have acted with particular caution in respect to other neutral nations than those he had mentioned, and not have foolishly provoked America, whom we ought to consider as our relation, and to keep up, as it were, a *family compact* with her, founded in friendship, in cordiality, and in sincere good-will. To what extent such an amicable conduct had been pursued, it would be only necessary to revert to the different official proceedings that had taken place with respect to them, and from thence to see of which they had any right to complain. He proceeded to advert to the various grounds of grievance which the conduct of British ministers had afforded the Americans for complaint, and the accumulated causes of offence which they had given the United States. And, first of all, he complained of our conduct with respect to that part of the Treaty of Peace with the United States in 1783, which fixed the boundary and allotted to them the Barrier Posts, of which they had never yet been put in possession, and were still uneasy on that score. That point, the Marquis said, had been negotiated and settled by those who made the peace, after very great consideration; it made the limits of the United States complete. The sea, a natural boundary, served as a limit to the east, and, what was next to a natural boundary, the great lakes served as a limit to the north-west, and the rest was settled by the line of demarcation adjusted and stated in the treaty. The neglect on our part to fulfil these conditions had irritated the Americans, and induced suspicions of our fair intentions towards them, and those suspicions and that jealousy were rather increased than diminished, by the circumstance of our having assisted the Portuguese to enter into a truce with the Algerines and the States

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of Barbary. That conciliation, he said, was effected in consequence of the consent of Portugal to join the league against the French. The Portuguese, antecedent to that truce, had constantly opposed the Algerines, and kept a squadron of men of war at the mouth of the Straits, for which he had heard various reasons assigned; some attributed it to the old animosity between them and the Barbary States; others, that it was upon a ground of policy, lest their marine should fall entirely into decay; and another reason was, that the fleet was solely intended as a check upon the Algerine rovers against the American trade; and this seemed to him most likely to be the fact, because Portugal could barely subsist without supplies from that continent. In this point of view it was that our conduct stood condemned by the Americans, who were not at all reconcilable to the truce, as it was averred, on their parts, that the truce was acceded to by the Barbarians, upon the express condition that it should be kept a secret for six weeks. The consequence of which was, that the fleet and ships of the Algerines were let out upon them at once, and perfectly unawares, greatly to their loss and detriment, the sailies against American vessels proving successful, and a great number of them were actually seized near Lisbon, which might have been avoided, if their owners had been apprised of the negotiation privately concerted, carried on, and settled between the Portuguese, the Algerines, and this country.

The next cause of offence to America, the Marquis stated to be the Order of Council of June 8, 1793, to seize all ships (those of Sweden and Denmark excepted) laden with corn, to carry them into the first convenient port, there purchase the cargo for the use of his Majesty, and paying what might be thought sufficient for the freight, to dismiss them. This surely was not only strange and insolent conduct to an independent nation, dictating with whom they should trade, and to what place they should carry their cargoes, but an act of singular cruelty and injustice. It was, indeed, an instance of cruelty unprecedented in the history of wars, of hermetically starving twenty-six millions of people for matter of opinion; nor did any of the writers of the laws of nations state it as a principle to prevent a neutral power carrying corn into a belligerent nation; the restriction was only on arms and ammunition, but not on so necessary an article as corn, and the more important to America, as it was her staple commodity, which was almost the only return she could make for European supplies.

The Marquis here read an extract from a pamphlet, the better to enforce his argument.

Ministers, the Marquis said, might possibly console themselves in the enjoyment at home, of their places and emoluments; he would not disturb their happiness by moving for any papers relative to Tuscany, Sweden, and Denmark; the fate of America, however, he trusted, was not to be decided by their nods, their shrugs, or supercilious treatment. He expected on this subject an explicit answer, before the House precipitated into a war with that Republic. Ministers should consider that our commerce in that quarter was a matter of infinite magnitude. These were not idle words, nor should they be treated lightly. Mercantile men were anxious to be informed, and ought to be informed, what Government meant with respect to America. Was it the determination to force them into the present league, or was there a fixed design to plunge this country into a war with that Republic?

The next point the Marquis referred to was the Order of Council of November the 6th, for capturing all vessels carrying any sort of provision or stores to the French colonies. He remarked on the manner in which this order had been enforced, pointing out the great singularity of the fact, that not one ship had been taken in Europe, although such numbers had been captured in the West Indies. From the 6th of November to the 28th of March, upwards of 600 American vessels were captured, or detained, in the British ports. This detention he greatly reprobated, because it was continued after the hope of regular confiscation was abandoned, because the cargoes were damaged, and because the owners, after all, received no demurrage. He reprobated the absurd idea of starving the French, and the seizure of all vessels bound from America to France, laden with wheat and flour. He condemned this measure as unjust, and contrary to the law of nations; in fact, we had in this and other instances treated America more grossly than any other neutral nation, although she was entitled to the most favour from us. And at the same time, he declared, he disapproved of the non-permission of American vessels to sail from the British ports in the islands, unless they gave security for the discharge of their cargoes in some British or neutral ports. This unprecedented infringement of the laws of nations, it was notorious, gave serious alarm to the American merchants here, who made an immediate application to Government on the subject, determined to know on what they might depend, looking on it as a measure calculated to produce a rupture between the two countries. The order, however, was soon after revoked, which was a tacit confession on the part of ministers of the injustice and illegality of the measure.

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His Lordship read a letter from Mr. Jefferson to Mr. Pinkney, upon the subject of a categorical answer from the British cabinet, and the various applications to that effect. This letter was dated on the 18th of December. It complained of the silence of the British ministers, and construed that silence, as was natural, into contempt. The imprudence of provoking hostilities with America he demonstrated by the contiguity of our West India islands, by our retention of Canada, &c. by the quantity of manufacturers employed, by the yearly employment also of 230,000 ton of shipping, and by the danger our commerce to the West Indies would be exposed to in sailing along the vast and extensive coast of North America. Canada, he said, must fall, if we went to war with America.

After much able argument, the Marquis proceeded at length to that subject which immediately caused him to trouble their Lordships that day, viz. a paper which was published in the New York Journal, under the title of "An Extract from Quebec," stating a speech or discourse held by Lord Dorchester, in reply to Seven Tribes of Indians on the 10th of February, of the Seven Villages of Lower Canada, as deputies from all the nations, except three. He would read it, that their Lordships might know its contents. It was as follows:

By a letter from a Gentleman at Burlington, in Vermont, we are favoured with the following authentic copy of a Reply made by Lord DORCHESTER, to a deputation from Seven Tribes of Indians, at a Council held at the Castle of St. Lewis, in the City of Quebec, on the 10th day of February last.

Reply of his Excellency Lord Dorchester to the Indians of the Seven Villages of Lower Canada, as Deputies from all the Nations who were at the General Council, held at the Miami, in the year 1793, except the Chawanoos, Miamis, and Loups.

" Children,

" I have well considered your words, and am now prepared to reply.

" Children,

" You have informed me, that you are deputed by the Seven Villages of Lower Canada, and by all the Nations of the Upper Country, which sent deputies to the General Council, held at the Miamis, except the Chawanoos, Miamis, and Loups.

" Children,

" You remind me of what passed at the Council Fire, held at Quebec, just before my last departure for England, when I promised to represent their situation and wishes to the King, their father; and expressed my hope that all the grievances they complained of on the part of the United States, would soon be done away by a just and lasting peace.

" Children,

" I remember all very well: I remember that they pointed out to me the line of separation which they wished for between them and the United States, and with which they would be satisfied and make peace.

" Children,

" Children,

" I was in expectation of hearing from the people of the United States what was required by them; I hoped I should have been able to bring you together, and make you friends,

" Children,

" I have waited long, and listened with great attention, but I have not heard one word from them.

" Children,

" I flatter myself with the hope, that the line proposed in the year one thousand seven hundred and eighty-three, to separate us from the United States, which was immediately broken by themselves as soon as the peace was signed, would have been minded, or a new one drawn in an amicable manner: Here also I have been disappointed.

" Children,

" Since my return, I find no appearance of a line remains; and from the manner which the people of the States push on, and act, and talk on this side, and from what I learn of their conduct towards the sea, I shall not be surprised if we are at war with them in the course of the present year; and if we are, a line must then be drawn by the warriors.

" Children,

" You ask for a passport to go to New-York; a passport is useless in peace; it appears, therefore, that you expect we shall be at war with the States before you return. You shall have a passport, that, whether peace or war, you shall be well received by the King's warriors.

" Children,

" They have destroyed their right of pre-emption, therefore all their approaches towards us since that time, and all the purchases made by them, I consider as an infringement on the King's rights; and when a line is drawn between us, be it peace or war, they must lose all their improvement of houses on our side of it. The people must all be gone who do not obtain leave to become the King's subjects. What belongs to the Indians will of course be confirmed and secured to them.

" Children,

" What further can I say to you? You are our witnesses, that on our part we have acted in the most peaceable manner, and borne the language of the United States with patience, and I believe our patience is almost exhausted.

" Given under my hand, at the Castle of St. Lewis, in the City of Quebec, on the 10th day of February, in the year of our Lord 1794.

(Signed)

DORCHESTER.

By his Excellency's command,

(Signed)

HEMAN WISSIUS RYLAND, Secretary."

The Marquis argued upon the dangerous consequence of such a paper, if it were authentic. He professed to know little of its authenticity, and therefore he called upon ministers to say whether there had been any thing in their instructions to the Noble Lord to authorise the holding of such language? He could not believe that a man so respectable and discreet as Lord Dorchester would have held such language without authority; but a paper of so extraordinary a sort having appeared in print, could it, to any reflecting man, be
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matter of surprise that the Americans had laid an embargo on our ships in their ports for thirty days? After all the exasperating circumstances of our conduct, after condemning so many of their ships, could any Noble Lord, judging from his own feelings, wonder that they had been at length roused into active indignation? And yet their moderation and forbearance had been most exemplary. His pockets, the Marquis said, were full of their proceedings, in which with temper, kindness, and regard for this country (the reverse of what we had practised towards them), they had come to this measure with the most remarkable reluctance. Flesh and blood, however, could not bear the outrages they had received. What motives ministers could have for their treatment of the American people, what motive for involving this country with its old brethren, with that people whom it ought to be our dearest wish to cherish and conciliate, he professed he could not conceive. Had it been held by ministers who opposed the peace that was made with the Americans, or who had declared they thought it a bad, improvident, ill-judged, and foolish peace, and that opportunities ought to be sought, and seized on, for recovering what was then surrendered, it might at least be accounted for, though not in our present circumstances justified; but the ministers who had acted in this strange way towards America, were some of them persons who had assisted in making the peace; who were well acquainted with the motives on which every part of the conditions of the peace was founded, and entirely approved of them; and their motives therefore were to him inscrutable. Their measures tended to destroy all harmony, all confidence, between this country and America. Had they changed their opinions with respect to America? He declared he was not an enemy to men changing their opinions upon great political questions, as men might see good and sufficient reason for so doing; but in such cases they ought with candour to state the grounds upon which they had so altered their judgment. Did they mean to say that they were young men when the peace with America was made, that they were not experienced in business, and that they had been deceived by a man more experienced in State affairs than themselves, in whom they placed indiscreet confidence, but that they had since seen cause for changing their opinion on the subject? Undoubtedly they might reason in this manner, but no such language had ever been used. They had never given a hint, that they at present thought otherwise of the American peace than they did at a former time. What arguments there might be against the restitution of the posts it-
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pulated to be given up by the treaty, he knew not; nor would he inquire into the previous circumstances that occasioned the contention between the two countries, which could not be recurred to without exciting horror in the breast of every feeling and honourable man. He wished not even to glance at those circumstances. He wished that the transaction with Algiers should be totally stifled; for no one part of our conduct would redound either to ministerial or national credit. With great sincerity he assured the House, he had no other view in making the motion he should conclude with, than to avert danger. It was not his wish to widen, but to heal, the differences between the two countries. His motion could not be attended with any mischievous consequences, because it afforded ministers an opportunity of defence, by clearing themselves from imputations, which, if false, might produce most dreadful consequences. If they were true, it was fit to bring them forward, that the wisdom of the Legislature might correct the rashness of the Government. He had no hostility to ministers in the affair. In private life, if a person was vilified, an honourable and candid man would fairly tell him what was imputed to him, that he might justify himself if right, or prove his innocence if aspersed. He should be happy to hear that the paper he had read, was not a genuine paper; that Lord Dorchester had had no such communication with the Indians; and that it was a mere newspaper story, unfounded in fact. If this should come out, his agitation of the matter could not fail to do good, as it would serve only to tranquillize the minds of men, and open the way for perfect conciliation, which he most devoutly wished. After much strong and general argument, the Marquis concluded with moving, "That an address be presented to the King, praying that his Majesty would give directions, that there be laid before this House, Copies of such Instructions as have been given or sent to Lord Dorchester, relative to all differences subsisting between this Country and the United States of America, as well as such communications as he may have made of conferences with the Indian Tribes North-west of the Ohio, relative thereto."

Lord Grenville said, he did not intend to enter into a discussion of the extraneous matter introduced into the speech of the Noble Marquis, not that every part of his speech, whether immediately relative or not, did not appear to him to be most seriously important and worthy of consideration, but he did not think his Majesty's ministers were in the least indebted to the Noble Lord for giving them an opportunity to vindicate themselves against that which appeared to him to be no charge.

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Those measures which the servants of the Crown had thought it necessary to adopt with respect to neutral nations, had already been discussed pretty much at large in that House, and therefore it was unnecessary for him to enter upon it at that time. With respect to what the Noble Marquis had been pleased to call the unexampled and unqualified severity of our Executive Government, and the dangers which he suggested as likely to ensue, both from our conduct to foreign powers, and our internal policy, he would answer, that the conduct of the Executive Government, and that of the Legislature likewise, had been so far from meriting that character, that he was confident both would be found, on a fair examination into circumstances, to have been lenient, and perhaps in some instances criminally tender, to those who deserved immediate punishment. To what Assembly could the Noble Marquis address such language? Was it to their Lordships, who were in possession of the conduct of those, who, for the two last years, aimed at subverting the constitution of the country? The fact undeniably was, that instead of prosecuting for opinion, as the Noble Lord had charged them, they had suffered those opinions to go on for two years, until principles of a dangerous nature had been found not only to exist, but ready to be put in action. Comparing it with the conduct of another nation, who aimed at subverting the constitution of this country, who were said to be at present fighting for liberty of person and opinion, and who on that account ought to be liberal as well as active, the ministers of this country had been unusually moderate and forbearing, as he had just said, perhaps to a degree of criminality. The Noble Marquis had talked of the intention of starving the poor distressed country of France. Distressed and poor it was true she was, and was earnestly desirous, from the introduction of her principles, to reduce every other country to a similar situation. How then could blame attach to his Majesty's ministers, for having used such precautions as would prevent the consequence of the introduction of that ruinous system, and preserve the protection of our laws, and the security offered to us by our constitution? There was scarcely an individual in the country who did not feel that England was called upon to go to war against the common enemy of mankind. The Noble Lord had also expressed his sorrow at the oppressions of so large a nation as France: That they were oppressed, severely oppressed, was a lamentable fact; but by whom? Not, as the Noble Lord had said, by the powers who had combined for the security of the peace of Europe, but by a set of barbarians, who had got into power, and who preserved that power by deluges of human blood. As to a great

part of the speech of the Noble Marquis, the conduct of Parliament had been a fair refutation of the calumny which it seemed intended to convey. The calamities of war he believed there was no good individual who did not lament as seriously as himself; calamities, however, which were much more likely to be increased than diminished by the language the House had heard that day; as it was more calculated to irritate the passions than to appease them. While we were thus called upon to lament the calamities of war, it should not be forgotten how we got into it. The war was a war that we had been constrained to enter into, after a long, a patient, and an unexampled forbearance of making any return to the many insults and affronts that had been cast upon us by France. At length, when it would have been dishonourable to forbear any longer, we found ourselves forced into a defensive war; and that war we must carry on, let its consequences be what they might. With regard to that part of the Noble Marquis's speech which went to lament the calamities of the war, his Lordship said, it was idle to suppose that his Majesty's ministers did not feel, and deeply feel, those events and calamities; but those calamities were ascribable to the French, who rendered the war barbarous by their sanguinary conduct, and their plundering of every village that fell into their hands. It was to be recollected, that if war brought on calamities, the misfortune on our part was unavoidable; and the cause of it must be imputed to those who commenced it, and not to us, who had no choice between hostility and dishonour, or even destruction.

With respect to the conduct of this country towards neutral nations, Lord Grenville said, he was persuaded that the more it was examined, the more it would appear to be consonant to the spirit of the law of nations. He would go further, and assert, that if this country was blameable at all on that subject, it was for having exercised an unusual degree of lenity and forbearance: Let those who entertained any doubts on that point, look into all that had been written by the best authors on the law of nations, under the article of self-defence, and they would find that his assertions in this respect were strictly true. Much had been said upon the liberality of the English character; he agreed that it was a liberal character, and he hoped it would ever retain that feature; but he knew of no right the Executive Government had in excess of liberality to sacrifice the interests of the country to the views of its enemies, while we were carrying on a defensive war.

He came at length to a particular observation, which he thought himself called upon to make upon the object of the motion

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motion of the Noble Marquis. Whatever he thought, he felt himself bound in decorum, decency, and respect to that House, not to exceed the limits of its rules and orders; all, therefore, he could say was, that, be the motives of the Noble Marquis what they might, with his sense of the duty of an Englishman, and more particularly with his sense of the duty of a Member of a British Parliament, he should not have been induced to make a speech similar to that which preceded the present motion: That speech having been made, all that the House could do, was to prevent the effect it might otherwise produce.

The Noble Marquis had said, that the Government of this country had conducted itself unjustly towards America, with reference to the plan of our peace with the United States; a plan which the Noble Marquis maintained to be a wise one, and deliberately adopted several years ago, and which it was said the Government of this country disregarded and abandoned, and that we were at present pursuing measures with America which tended to involve us in a war with them. With regard to the peace, as it had been adopted, he thought this country bound to abide by it. With regard to the line of posts stipulated in the treaty of peace with America as the boundary of the United States, he had not been in Parliament early enough to remember the origin of the American war, or the turn that the debates took upon that subject; and though not in any ministerial office at the time, he had voted for the peace, not because he approved all the articles, but because he supposed less concessions would have been made, if peace could have been obtained and concluded on better terms, and terms more advantageous to this country. The fixing the boundaries and the line of posts, he had never considered as the article of most advantage to Great Britain in that treaty, nor had he ever conversed with any individual who understood the subject, who entertained a different opinion. The article might have been necessary, as perhaps we could not have had better terms; and when concluded, they must be binding, and must, therefore, be punctually observed; all treaties however were to be considered on terms of mutual and reciprocal benefit and advantage to both the contracting parties; if one side did not fulfil the conditions stipulated, it was an ample reason why the other should not be over-forward to comply with all the stipulations she was bound to, since it would be new, indeed, in the affairs of states, if a nation, making considerable sacrifices on its part, should not expect to obtain also the advantages of that treaty to itself; such never had been the construction of treaties, while they were to be interpreted by good sense. It would be idle for him to say any thing more on that part of

the subject. He could have no interest, he said it with sincerity, he had no disinclination towards America; he had no desire that we should be on any other footing towards them than that of perfect amity and good correspondence. He could say more; as to his conduct since he had been charged with that office which he now held, he had delivered it as his opinion, in which he concurred with all public men he knew, that the interest of America and Great Britain was to be on terms of friendship and good-will; and that this was mutual. By that principle, he would be bold to say, every part of the conduct of the Executive Government of this country had been uniformly governed, during the whole period since the conclusion of the peace. The Noble Marquis had insinuated to the contrary: He said that our Government had departed from the terms: He really did not comprehend in what particular. What the reason for bringing forward the charge might be, he was perfectly ignorant. Still more at a loss was he to know in what this Government had disgraced itself: He hoped that nothing of that sort would be felt by this country. And so conscious was he of their endeavours to act unexceptionably, that he was ready to take his share of the responsibility which belonged to his station, for the advice he gave to his Sovereign on that subject.

A material circumstance, stated by the Noble Marquis as a cause of offence and jealousy to America, was our conduct with respect to Algiers; and he could not refrain from saying, that if there were in this country any enemies to it and to America, desirous of propagating unfounded reports, for the purpose of alienating America from this country, he hoped they would miss their object. He could have wished that, when charges of a serious kind were urged against Government, they had been first examined and ascertained before they were brought forward as matter of debate; it was, he observed, no light thing to be thrown out by a Noble Lord, who had filled the highest offices of the State, that this country was willing to provoke America to a war. It was not a trifling matter to make charges in that House, and to state that certain reports had obtained credit: But he hoped and trusted they would make no more impression than they ought to make. He wished to state briefly and plainly the case upon this subject, and their Lordships would see whether it bore the colour which the speech of the Noble Marquis was calculated to impress. The conduct of the Executive Government upon this, as upon other occasions, had been directed with view to repel Jacobin arms and Jacobin principles; and there was guilt in that conduct, he begged leave to plead guilty. With regard to the peace effected through his M-

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jeſty's mediation between the Portugueſe and the Algerines, could any man have imagined, that when Portugal, our old, our faithful ally, at the commencement of a war ſo important as the preſent, was deſirous of making peace with the Barbary States, and ſolicited the King to interpoſe his good offices for the purpoſe, that his Maſteſty's miniſters, for having taken the proper meaſures to atchieve that object, ſhould be accuſed of having acted improperly, or of having done more or leſs than their immediate duty? His Lordſhip declared, that he would not heſitate in affirming, that this country could not poſſibly feel any repugnance on that ſubject. In conſequence of this feeling on the part of Government, orders were ſent to negotiate a peace between Portugal and the Barbary States. This negotiation in part failed, a peace was not concluded, and the mediation of Great Britain could only procure a truce. The miniſter, on that occaſion, had conducted himſelf in a manner that did him honour; but it was by no means true, that that truce, as far as he was informed, was kept a ſecret for any ſiniſter purpoſe, or any longer than the nature of the tranſaction rendered it neceſſary. Indeed he little expected to have heard a charge from the Noble Marquis, either in reference to this point or to that which accuſed miniſters of wiſhing to provoke a war with America, which could be conſidered as little leſs than a calumniatory libel on his Maſteſty's Government.

The Noble Marquis had proceeded to the Order of Government in Council of June 8, and he muſt confeſs that his obſervations on this part of the ſubject were extraordinary indeed. He confeſſed he did not expect to hear that it was a crime on the part of this country to ſeize, not for condemnation, but merely to detain, afterwards to value, and then to pay for the cargo of ſhips laden with corn, that were on their voyage for the purpoſe of ſupplying our enemy. He thought nothing was plainer in the principle of the law of nations, than that we had a right to detain ſhips laden with provisions for the enemy, if we paid the full value for them afterwards. Indeed, he thought when we ordered theſe ſhips not to be condemned, but to be purchaſed, we did not inſiſt fully on the law of nations in our favour, but relaxed even from the ſpirit of that law, having granted to America advantages that had not been allowed to Sweden and to Denmark: Miniſters would have been juſtified by precedent in proceeding very differently againſt America upon this ſubject, but all poſſible care was taken to afford the United States all poſſible favour and advantage. With reſpect to the charge againſt the Order of Council of the 6th of November, he could wiſh their Lordſhips to turn their attention for a few moments to the particularity

larity of the circumstances which occasioned it. The French, feeling themselves unable to bring their cargoes directly to Europe, had gone with the whole produce of their West India islands to America, and waiting there an opportunity to come home with safety, to meet this circumstance the order was made, and it ought to be considered in its true light as a temporary measure, merely adopted with a view to a particular object, and when that object was at an end, it was revoked and taken off. This revocation, he acknowledged, was partly produced by the requisition of a body of individuals, who stated, that it might possibly be attended with inconveniences and injury. But America could take no just cause of offence at the order, issued as it had been to meet a case of sudden emergency. Thus, then, he conceived, he had replied to the whole of the objections the Noble Marquis had been pleased to bring forward, extraneous as they were to the subject; and to come at last to the real object of the motion, in his opinion it had not been supported in the smallest degree. The paper, which the Noble Marquis had read from the New-York Gazette, he could only say for himself, he knew nothing of; he had never seen it, nor had he heard of it, before the Noble Marquis produced and read it. What support then could be said to be given to that motion, which was defended only by an extract of a letter inserted in a newspaper? It was impossible for him to argue either its propriety or impropriety upon such slender grounds. It might be false, it might be true; but he thought a New-York newspaper was not a sufficient ground for a Parliamentary proceeding. If it was true, it would be authentically transmitted to Government by the Noble Lord whose name it bore, and it would then be time enough to proceed upon it; but it was not proper in respect to the character of that Noble Lord, not proper in respect to their own characters, for their Lordships to proceed upon it without some better authority. He knew this paper only from the New-York newspaper; he confessed he had no inclination to discuss before their Lordships the contents of a New-York newspaper; and he could not do so much injury to the Noble Lord, who was supposed to have made use of those expressions, as to give an opinion upon them. He hoped that nothing would occur to occasion a difference between the two countries; and much dependence, he thought, might be safely placed on the prudence, talents, and experience of the Noble Lord who presided at Quebec. His opinion therefore was, that the speech of the Noble Marquis was not consonant with his motion, nor did it go to the extent of establishing the propriety of agreeing to this motion. He did not believe that either, whatever might

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might be the intention of their author, would have the effect of producing any advantage to this country. He believed that they would produce some disadvantage; and, in his judgment, their Lordships would increase that disadvantage by lending either their countenance; he should, therefore, feel it his duty to give the motion a direct negative.

The Duke of Grafton and Lord Sydney rose together; but Lord Sydney sitting down, the Duke said, he rose to give the Noble Marquis his hearty support; he reminded their Lordships that he had before expatiated on the unfortunate war in which ministers, by their neglect or misconduct, had plunged this country; and to the last moment of his life, he declared, he should attribute the calamitous situation in which this country was at present involved, to the erroneous policy adopted by the present Administration. Their Lordships, he said, should not accuse him of treading on grounds that had been trodden before, or of using arguments that had been so frequently used; but he would contend, that whoever looked at the situation of the country, not with a desponding, but with a melancholy eye, would be convinced that Great Britain was not prepared to endure any new misfortune. His Grace denied the argument that either the motion of the Noble Marquis, or his speech, could irritate America, or do harm between the two countries. Just the contrary. All that had that day passed in the House, would convince America how anxious Noble Lords were to prevent any ground for ill-humour, any cause for complaint, and how sincerely desirous they were to maintain that sort of union with America, which the Noble Marquis had significantly termed a *Family Compact*. He hoped that it would convince them, that in this country there were no dark-laid schemes, no ambiguous system of policy, but that an open and manly mode of conduct was adopted. The Noble Secretary of State had said he was not answerable for any thing that appeared in a New-York newspaper; but there were facts perfectly notorious which required explanation. We all knew that an embargo had been laid on the ships of America: If there had not, he begged to be better informed. He wished that this country should assure America of its determination to act fairly; for if it should come to pass that this country and America should lift up their arms in hostility to each other, then he should say we should consider the relative situations of the two countries, and compare them; but he wished them to be considered as really united under a *Family Compact*; and God forbid the day should arrive when they should be otherwise! The Noble Secretary of State had declared, that he never saw the paper produced by the Noble Marquis. That was not enough;

enough; he wished the Noble Secretary of State to go one step further, and to tell their Lordships whether there was any thing in the instructions sent to Lord Dorchester, that warranted the speech said to be made by him; or authorised him to hold such a conversation with the Indian delegates from the Indian tribes: It was a link of the chain which the Americans, whether rightly or wrongly, had considered as a pre-meditated hostility against them. What would be the inference from silence on this occasion? He begged, he implored the minister to give the House some information upon the subject; a single word might avert tremendous evils. His Grace remarked upon the importance to America of the Orders of Council, as they affected the export of corn, which was the staple of the United States. He concluded by declaring, that of all wars, a war with America would most excite his abhorrence.

Lord Sydney began with an apology to the Duke of Grafton, and declared that it had been far from his meaning to have interrupted his Grace; but having lived in habits of intimacy all his life with the Noble Lord alluded to in the course of the Noble Marquis's speech, he was anxious to do justice to his character. His Lordship then spoke in high terms on the ability with which Lord Dorchester had discharged his duty in the various capacities in which he had been employed in the service of his country; and after some arguments on the manner in which the knowledge of Lord Dorchester's speech had been communicated to the House, contended, that admitting the speech that the Noble Marquis had said to have been spoken by his Lordship, it did not contain any application to his Majesty's ministers; he thought, therefore, sufficient reliance might be placed upon the ability of Lord Dorchester, to give their Lordships assurance, that he would not be the cause of a breach with America; nor did he think any reliance ought to rest on an article which appeared in a newspaper. He should therefore vote against the motion.

The Earl of Lauderdale assured the House, that after the able speeches of his Noble Friend and the Noble Duke, he should not have conceived it necessary to have troubled their Lordships with any observations, if some remarks, which had fallen from the Secretary of State and the Noble Viscount, had not rendered such observations indispensibly necessary. It had lately become a fashion to talk much of extraneous matter, and, in compliance with the fashion, it had been said by the Secretary of State, that a great part of the speech of the Noble Marquis was extraneous. For his own part, he had never heard arguments less extraneous than those that had been stated

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in that speech. The Noble Secretary, while he complained of extraneous matter in speeches, had himself made a speech the most extraneous that had been heard that night. The Noble Marquis, before he made his motion, alluded to a paper published at New-York, and called upon the Secretary of State to explain it, as he thought the contents, if true, might involve us in a war. The Noble Secretary of State said, he knew nothing of the paper, and then proceeded to pronounce a panegyric on the conduct of the Executive Government of the country; and yet in this way others were to be accused of introducing extraneous matter. It had been said, that events of importance had lately occurred in America, which events it had been thought necessary to discuss. Was there, he would ask, any thing extraneous in so doing? Yet, even admitting that there was, he would contend, that the example alledged to have been set by the Noble Marquis, had been in every respect imitated by the Secretary of State; for the former had not touched upon any subject, of which the latter had not entered into as deep a discussion as the subject would admit.

His Lordship said, the Noble Marquis had naturally been led to a view of the state of affairs at home and abroad, because his Lordship required it. How far his observations respecting both had been answered, he would leave to their Lordships' judgment. With regard to that part of the Secretary of State's speech, which related to the lenity of the Executive Government, as to our internal affairs, his Lordship reprobated it severely. Did the Noble Secretary, he would ask, suppose that their Lordships had lost all memory upon the subject? To what part of the history of this country could men look for such a system of coffee-house spies and informers as were at this time encouraged and protected? Had the Noble Secretary no recollection of some recent prosecutions, marked with a peculiar degree of harshness and severity? Had he forgotten what had passed in that and another House of Parliament, on the subject of sentences passed in a distant part of the kingdom? He owned he was surprised to hear ministers call for instances of severity, with such cases in their minds: And yet the Noble Secretary of State had asserted, that so far from these prosecutions having been entered into with eagerness, Government had waited till the offences to which they applied had ripened into action. He had heard, indeed, somewhat of this ripeness; but he contended, that it had alone been attempted to be provoked by declamation. The Secretary of State should have proved that any of these designs had been followed up by action; so far from having done this, he was

unable to prove that there was any probability they ever would. The Government had, nevertheless, proceeded as if the country was in a state of actual rebellion; this was the notable proof which the minister had to give of the criminal tenderness of the Executive Government. He could not help observing, that when the Secretary of State talked of the Noble Marquis's declamation, he was himself adopting the same error with which he found fault, and was attempting to prove, by declamation, that the country was in a state of rebellion. The Secretary of State having thus finished his observations on the internal state of the country, and talked of plots, which, if they were formidable, ministers had themselves fostered and nursed till they came to maturity; had proceeded to the state of our external affairs, roundly asserting, that Great Britain had been forced into the war on defensive grounds. Without travelling over the old arguments, his Lordship contended, that it was a farce and a mockery to say that the country was acting now on the defensive. Granting, however, that it was defensive at its commencement, no one, he affirmed, would deny that the principle of the war had been changed, and that the country was and had been acting offensively. What! engaged in a defensive war, and seize all the French West India islands! Engaged in a defensive war, and declare that peace shall not be made, till the conquest of France be completed! This was the most curious mode of proving a defensive war, that the imagination of man could devise. It was a mode of proof, which set at defiance all the arguments used by all authors who had said that though a war might be purely defensive at its commencement, yet that the manner in which that war might be carried on might change it from a defensive to an offensive war. The Secretary of State had again called the war a contest for our just rights, and for the cause of justice, morality, and religion; and this was to be an answer to a charge of our having disregarded the faith of our treaty with the Americans. Such was the language of the Noble Secretary of State; and yet the Noble Secretary was the person who accused other Noble Lords of introducing a great deal of extraneous matter. It had been alledged against the Noble Marquis that he had adduced no facts. This allegation was by no means correct; facts *had* been adduced, and facts of a strong nature. Was not the Order of Council of the 6th of November a fact? by the revocation of which Order, ministers had, in the most forcible manner, condemned their own conduct. Was not the condemnation of American ships in the West Indies a fact? Condemnation which had proceeded on the supposition, that the conveyance of sugar from the West Indies

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Indies to America, was a proof that the sugar was the produce of the French West India islands. Having completed the discussion of the Noble Marquis's speech, the Secretary of State had thought it decent to discuss the motives which had induced the Marquis to make that speech. It would, in his opinion, have been more satisfactory to have discussed the speech more ably, than to have thus made any observations on the motives. Was the Noble Lord prepared to say, that discussions even of subjects upon which no regular documents were before the House were improper? Had his Lordship forgotten the debates on the Russian Armament, which debates had prevented a war, and had induced the ministers to lower their language, and descend from arrogance to humility? With regard to the conduct of Administration towards neutral powers, his Lordship maintained it to be contrary, in all respects, to the law of nations. Having given instances of this to illustrate his argument, he touched upon the motives of the Noble Marquis, who brought forward the motion, which he justified. Having stated that it would be more satisfactory to the people, to hear from Government that Lord Dorchester's speech had not been authorised by his instructions, his Lordship expressed his detestation of a war with America; and he declared, that the present war with France was viewed by every man in the kingdom as the most calamitous contest in which Great Britain had ever the misfortune to be engaged. He concluded with saying, that he should give his assent to the motion.

The Earl of Carlisle said, he would detain their Lordships but a few minutes, with two or three observations. The Noble Marquis seemed to think a war with America highly probable. He hoped not; and, from his private information from America, he was inclined to believe the wish of the two countries for peace to be mutual. It was clearly not the interest of either country to differ, and when America saw that Great Britain had revoked her Order of Council of November last, as it would evidently shew that this country was inclined to relax, he believed the United States would be equally willing to relax. He agreed with the last Noble Speaker in his opinion respecting a war with America; at the same time, he wished it not to go into the world, that any person in that House had the smallest inclination to a rupture with the United States. It appeared to him, notwithstanding they had laid an embargo upon the vessels, that they also wished to keep upon good terms with this country. This might be drawn from the different debates which their Lordships might know had taken place upon the subject, in all of which a disposition to avoid hostilities plainly appeared, and it was for the mutual interest

of Great Britain and America to continue upon terms of friendship; for the reasons he had stated, he had no doubt of such being the event. With regard to the extract that had been read from a New-York newspaper, he thought it a very insufficient ground for a Parliamentary proceeding, and therefore he should give his dissent to the motion.

The Earl of Coventry reminded the Noble Marquis, that he had once stood alone in that House against the American war, and that a few days before the motion was made * in the other House, that ultimately ended in a conclusion of the war and a change of Administration, he had intended to make a similar motion in that House; but on consulting the Noble Marquis in an adjoining apartment, he found the Noble Marquis could not concur in it, and therefore he returned into the House, and stated that he had changed his mind. With regard to the paper read from the New-York Gazette, to ground a motion on it, was to combat a shadow, as, in fact, there was nothing to contest with; and therefore he should give the motion his negative.

The Earl of Radnor thought the subject a delicate one, and hoped they would be unanimous in rejecting the motion; but he could not agree that a newspaper was not a sufficient Parliamentary ground for calling on ministers for explanation. Any paper whatever, or even a Peer's imagination, of a matter of importance, was, in his mind, sufficient ground for the agitation of a question upon the subject in that House. It rested with their Lordships to judge whether the motion should be assented to; that must depend upon the arguments for and against it. After stating his arguments strongly, his Lordship concluded with declaring, that he should vote against the question.

The Earl of Caernarvon said, that the Noble Marquis had not laid any plausible ground for his motion; and, indeed, the extraneous matter which was contained in that part of his speech which he heard, was defended in a singular manner, by observing, that the Noble Secretary of State had gone over the same ground in his reply. "It may certainly be very proper and very necessary, not to leave unanswered that which it might have been originally very improper to press on the public attention. As far as it appears to the House, the Noble Marquis has read, in the American newspapers, something which displeases him in Lord Dorchester's supposed answer to some unstated message from the Indian tribes, and he therefore desires that his Majesty's ministers may lay before the House all the instructions given to Lord Dorchester, relating to the

* By General Conway, on the 22d of February 1782.

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differences between the American States and those Indian tribes, and the several accounts which they may have received respecting those differences. The Noble Marquis must either establish that it is consistent with Parliamentary wisdom to call for the production of such instructions and accounts respecting a negotiation to accommodate the differences between two nations; matters in their nature of probable secrecy; and to do this upon not the slightest ground stated; for an article of a newspaper which may be false or true, is certainly not authority to found a Parliamentary proceeding upon; and the motion must be equally admissible upon no ground, as such ground (though not subsisting) may be made for the purpose. The Noble Marquis may have inserted the paragraph himself; I do not impute it to him; but any Noble Lord may make the ground of such a motion, if it did not exist, by a paragraph inserted in the newspaper. The Noble Duke (Grafton) does not go the length of the Noble Mover; but he makes as singular a proposal: He intreats the Noble Secretary to satisfy his curiosity by going one step farther than he had done, and acquaint him what instructions had been given to Lord Dorchester, to make this answer to a message which they could not know would be made; on either or both these grounds the proposition was highly objectionable."

The Earl of Mansfield declared, he did not intend to add much to the length of the debate; but merely wished to utter a few short sentences. His Lordship first took notice of that part of the argument of his Noble Friend, the Earl near him (Lord Lauderdale), which referred to the trials for sedition, held before the Court of Justiciary of Scotland, and the judgments pronounced upon the persons convicted on those trials. That question he considered as a question decided upon and sufficiently settled, as the conduct of the Judges and the Court had been placed on the vantage-ground of having been sanctioned by their Lordships' explicit approbation. All, therefore, that might now be said on that subject, might be considered as wanton and useless declamation; and, however strong the arm that threw the javelin of calumny against ministers in that respect, and in various others touched on by the Noble Marquis and those Noble Lords who supported his motion, he was perfectly sure it would be found *telum imbelles sine ictu*. The necessity of the war had, he said, been so often discussed, that it was at this time pretty generally understood. He was somewhat surprised at the Noble Earl's reasoning on that point; the Noble Earl had been betrayed into a strange confusion of terms, or he could not have talked as he had done of offensive and defensive war. The meaning of defen-

five war, universally agreed upon, was to repel attacks, and to give the enemy as many thrusts as he laid himself open to. The object of defence was clearly two-fold; to defend with precaution and skill, and to attack the assailant wherever vulnerable. The Noble Marquis, his Lordship said, had asserted that six Kings were united against a single, poor, oppressed country. He would not enter into reasoning upon that assertion; but he scarcely thought the multitudes dragged to the scaffold in Paris died contented, because they died the death of Kings. With regard to the corn of America, under the peculiar circumstances of the war, he thought the measure perfectly justifiable; and was at a loss to reconcile to his understanding, such as it was, how the Americans could be stated to be sufferers, having received the full value of their cargoes seized in British guineas, instead of French assignats. It was to be recollected, that Paris had been declared by its rulers to be in a state of blockade; if so, it must be admitted to be warrantable on our part to intercept all supplies. One word or two his Lordship begged leave to say to the particular and immediate subject of the motion: And first, he thought it necessary to observe, that the New-York Gazette was of no more authority than any other newspaper; ministers were therefore warrantable in not answering the question of the Noble Duke. Besides, every one of their Lordships who knew any thing of the nature of diplomatic concerns, could not be ignorant that it was impossible for ministers to tie down foreign agents so as not to allow them the discretion of acting in particular cases, as the circumstances of the case should require. The lot of the ambassador or governor of a foreign power was not to be envied, if he were denied a proper latitude of discretion, or his secret instructions were incautiously to be divulged in compliance with the compromise proffered by the Noble Duke. His Lordship said, he spoke feelingly, because he had been in the situation. He professed great respect for Lord Dorchester, as a man, whose military and civil character he had always heard highly praised; he had not the honour to be much personally known to him, but he could not resist giving credit to merits which every body allowed that Noble Lord.

The Duke of Grafton said, that he meant no compromise, nor any thing like a compromise. The Noble Lord in office had gone one step in denying that he had seen the paper; all he wished, therefore, was, that the Noble Lord would go a step further, and as he had explained the Order of November last, to do the same in this instance, and not get rid of the question by an elusive answer. He thought, and he was still of opinion, that when a matter of so much consequence was brought forward,

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ward, on the notoriety which this transaction had, it would not misbecome ministers to give some satisfaction to the House and the country on the subject. It was not the truest way of maintaining their dignity; and it would be poor consolation to desolated mankind, to be told that the forms of the House made it inconvenient for them to take into their consideration what regarded the fate of nations.

The Marquis Townshend said, in his mind, the conduct of the Noble Secretary had been perfectly fair. A paper had been read, of which he knew nothing, and he had fairly said so. They had nothing, therefore, before them, upon which there could be a question.

Lord Grenville denied that he had given an elusive answer; he had not used the smallest prevarication; he had met the question fairly, and given a direct reply. Feeling it his duty to the situation he held to be silent upon the proposition of the Noble Duke, he was determined the public interest should not be injured by his divulging what he knew ought to be concealed; and therefore it was that he had stated he should wish their Lordships to negative the address for these papers. He never wished to elude a question. He was not bound to answer the interrogatories of individual Peers. If the House should call upon him to answer, he knew his duty, and was at their command.

Earl Stanhope rose to make a single observation. The Noble Secretary of State had, in his first speech, made use of an expression which he had taken down at the time, and which he could not retract; he had stated, that he knew nothing about the supposed reply of Lord Dorchester, which had appeared in the New-York papers; it might be false, or it might be true. It might be true, he admitted that he knew of it. [A general cry of *No! No!*] Then, said the Noble Earl, we are to collect from the Noble Secretary, that it is possible instructions may be gone out to set on the Indians. [The Lords very generally called out *Order!*] The conclusion was obvious; it could not be true, unless orders had been sent out; and the Noble Lord had said it might be true.

Lord Grenville said, it would have been unnecessary for him to reply to any other Peer, but so gross a misstatement of his reasoning coming from the Noble Earl, he rose merely to appeal to their Lordships, whether he had said any thing like what the Noble Earl chose to represent him to have said?

Earl Stanhope said, the Noble Secretary ought at least to state what was the gross misrepresentation.

The Marquis of Lansdown rose to reply, and confessed he had expected a very different reception to his motion than the
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retort of calumny, and so many personalities. As to the purity of his motives, in the present proceeding, he should certainly not condescend to take any other notice of the observations that had been made, than to say, that their motives were before a higher tribunal than that House, and a tribunal which he truly respected; they were before the tribunal of the Public. Whose motives were purest, they and posterity would rigorously examine; for himself, he would say, that if the purity of his life were to be tried, he should wish to have it tried by this test; for he had no earthly inducement to the motion he had made, but to preserve, if it was yet possible, this country from the dreadful fate of a war with our old brethren. He had urged the motion with great sincerity, as a friend to what the Noble Duke had been pleased to approve; as a friend to the preservation of what he had taken the liberty of terming a *Family Compact* between America and Great Britain, and with a view to convince America, that this country meant nothing short of a most cordial, sincere, and permanent friendship with the United States. The sentiment of the Noble Duke near him was worthy of his judgment, his experience, and his good sense. With regard to this new mode of Parliamentary discussion which ministers had adopted, that of ascribing motives to others which they could not justify, he could not consider it otherwise, than an endeavour to evade the true point in discussion. Instead of such pitiful personalities, he owned he expected to have heard language that should have tended to conciliate the people of America, language that should have allayed the ferment which their conduct had excited. He denied that he had introduced any extraneous matter; surely, it was not extraneous to state all the circumstances of our present condition, when we were, perhaps, on the eve of plunging into a new war. With regard to the line of boundary, the Noble Lord had said, that he had been too young at the time of the peace to have taken any part respecting it; but that he did not think the line of boundary was an article advantageous to this country.

Lord Grenville begged pardon for interrupting the Noble Marquis; but he found it necessary to declare, that he had only said that he had not began public life sufficiently early to mix in the debate respecting the origin and conduct of the American war; but that he had voted for the peace, although he did not think the article stating the American boundary and the line of posts the most advantageous to this country.

The Marquis of Lansdown thanked the Noble Lord for having interrupted him, as nothing could be farther from his mind than an intention to misrepresent him. He would, however,

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ever, tell the Noble Lord, that if it was wrong in ministers who made the peace to concede the boundary in question, and give up the posts to America, they were highly culpable, and ought to be impeached; for he had no hesitation to say, that they might have kept the posts if they would, and a still larger extent of country than they had secured to Great Britain; but after very mature consideration, it was deemed wise and proper to concede to such terms as should convince the United States, that they were sincere in their wishes to establish a cordial and stable reconciliation with America, and to create one common interest between the two countries. With regard to the idea, that if one contracting party did not fulfil her conditions of a treaty of peace, the other party was exonerated from discharging her agreement faithfully, the doctrine was perfectly new to him. He was in the ministry when the Falkland Islands were given up, and no idea then prevailed that they ought to be held till the Manilla ransom was paid. In like manner, when the Treaty of Peace was settled at Paris in 1769, who ever thought of withholding any part of the territory conceded to France, as a security against the great sums she stood indebted to this country for the exchange of prisoners, and on various other accounts, which were not paid till long afterwards? If we had kept the posts, and imitated the French in making a peace of mere temporary convenience, with a latent intention to keep the territory conceded, or seize it afterwards, we should have to erect fortresses, to have built octagons, and septagons, and sexagons, and pentagons, all along the frontier, and maintained garrisons on each at an enormous expence. The Noble Lord had said, he ought to produce his civil-law authorities for what he had said respecting neutral nations, and the conduct of Administration during the war. The task lay on the Noble Lord: He was not to prove the negative; and he was bound to say, the Noble Lord would not find the measures justified by the books. Where would he find authority for starving a whole nation, for treating twenty-five millions of people like a besieged fortress? Where would he find a precedent for making tobacco an article of provision? Where a precedent for saying to an independent state, that they would interrupt its legitimate commerce on the high seas, and yet to call it grace, because they were pleased to stop them from going to the markets to which they were designed, and to set what price they pleased upon their staple produce themselves? The Marquis said, Lord Dorchester was one of the most discreet men in existence; it was not likely, therefore, that he should have acted without authority from ministers. His Lordship concluded with an

earnest exhortation to their Lordships to reflect on the consequences of pushing such conduct further, and declared he would leave his motion to the judgment of their Lordships, who might dispose of it as they thought proper.

Lord Grenville rose to explain. His Lordship repeated what he had said in his last speech, viz. that he had voted for the peace, but had always thought the article respecting the boundary of the American States not to be of advantage to this country.

Lord Lansdown declared, that it was the first time he had heard that opinion. It would have been well if it had been given before. He lived in habits of such strict and perfect intimacy with the Noble Lord's family at that time, that such an opinion, if entertained by any of them, ought to have been communicated. On the contrary, every one of them expressed their entire approbation of the boundary line.

Lord Grenville said, he spoke only for himself; he never meant to insinuate that he had hinted his opinion to the Noble Marquis, or communicated it in any manner whatever to him personally.

Lord Lansdown repeated that neither he, nor any other member of his family, had at the time, or since, in public or private, expressed themselves as he had done that day about the boundary line of the treaty.

The House then divided:

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Majority	60

The Duke of Bedford gave notice, that on Friday the 30th he should call their Lordships' attention to a motion on the subject of the War, and he moved that their Lordships be summoned. Ordered.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, May 26.

INSOLVENT DEBTORS.

Mr. Hobart brought up the Report of the Bill for the relief of Insolvent Debtors under certain circumstances.

Mr. Jekyll observed, that no reason had been assigned for dating the period of the operation of the Bill so far back as the first of January. He thought it would be better, more equitable, and more consonant to the rules of common sense, that the operation of the Bill should come up to the 17th of April, which was the day on which the Bill was brought forward.

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ward by a Noble and Learned Lord in the other House. He said, that he was certain the object of the Bill was to do as much good as possible, and to make the relief as extensive as the nature of the case would permit; avoiding, at the same time, all opportunity of collusion and deceit on the part of the debtors. He should, therefore, propose one of two dates, for the Act to take place at; either the 17th of April, the day on which the Noble and Learned Lord brought it into the other House, or, if the Learned Gentleman thought that would be venturing too much, as he did not wish to propose any amendment which might cause the Bill to be rejected, he should propose the 12th of February, the first day of Hilary Term. He believed that but few, if any, sham judgments could have been signed, or sham executions issued, between the first of January and the 17th of April last, in contemplation of benefiting Insolvent Debtors by this Bill, for they could have had but little expectation of such a Bill as this, before it was brought forward; the general expectation was, that of a Bill to regulate the law of debtor and creditor; this was not a measure of that nature, nor any thing like it; at all events it would be better that a few fraudulent debtors, if there were such, should be discharged, than that all the unfortunate ones who had been imprisoned in the intermediate period he alluded to, should be confined; he therefore wished the 17th of April to be the date of the Bill, instead of the 1st of January.

The Master of the Rolls declared, that he was extremely desirous that some permanent law could be adopted, which would render such acts unnecessary; for they were a reflection upon our laws, and proved that they must contain in themselves some fundamental error. The Act, he conceived, ought to be made as extensive as could be done with safety; for he considered, that changing the date of its commencement might altogether endanger so necessary a Bill, and the disappointment that it would be to many could not but prove cruel in the extreme. He observed, that the numbers who had thrown themselves into the King's Bench and Fleet Prisons, from a hope of this Act, bore no proportion to those who were confined by actual creditors, at least from the period proposed by the Learned Gentleman. He himself wished that the Bill should remain for the 1st of January as it at present stood. Further than the 12th of February, he could not agree to.

Mr. Hussy said, he saw no good reason why the 12th of February, or 1st of January, should be adopted, rather than any other day. He was at a loss to conjecture why the Bill

should not commence from the day of the Noble and Learned Lord's having brought it forward into the Upper House; as previous to that no person could know any thing of it.

The Master of the Rolls explained.

The amendment that the Bill should go to the relief of all debtors, confined previous to the 12th of February, whose debts do not amount to 1000*l.* was moved and agreed to.

The Bill was then ordered to be engrossed, and read a third time.

AMERICA.

Mr. Sheridan called the attention of the House to what was, in his mind, a subject of considerable importance, as, under the present circumstances, a rupture with America must be attended with the most ruinous consequences to this country. The ignorance, inability, and inattention of ministers, had already involved us in one war, and he thought it but right that the attention of the country should be directed to prevent the same inability and indiscretion from involving us in another. At one period, when ministers had wished to involve the country in a war with Russia, the marked aversion of the people to such a measure had convinced them, that it was more prudent to abandon it, notwithstanding their support by a majority of that House. If there was any expectation of a rupture with America, he thought it would be wise not to prorogue the Parliament for any considerable time, but only by short adjournments, that, in case such an unfortunate event should take place, his Majesty might have the advantage of the advice of Parliament. His reasons for supposing that such an event was apprehended, and likely to take place, were founded on a paper, a copy of which he held in his hand, and which, by persons conversant in the affairs of America, was held to be authentic; and if it was not so, he held it to be the duty of Government to contradict it. It purported to be a reply from Lord Dorchester to the Delegates of several Indian Tribes, dated Fort Louis, February 10th, 1794; from which reply it appeared, that his Lordship considered this country as on the eve of a war with America. He begged leave to read to the House two paragraphs from this reply, to shew, that supposing it to be an authentic paper, his Lordship considered a war with America as inevitable, their conduct having almost exhausted the patience of this country. It certainly was not very probable that his Lordship would have ventured such an opinion without instructions: He thought it somewhat extraordinary, that when he mentioned, in the course of the present session, the defenceless state of Halifax, the Right Hon. Secretary of State should have said, that there was no danger

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to be apprehended in that quarter, if, at the same time, he was conscious of such instructions having been sent to Lord Dorchester. Mr. Sheridan concluded by moving, "That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, that he would be graciously pleased to give directions that there be laid before the House a copy of the answer delivered by Lord Dorchester, on the 10th of February, to the Indians of Lower Canada, and also a copy of the instructions sent to Lord Dorchester."

Mr. Secretary Dundas declared, that it was the first time he had ever heard of the paper in question, which he did not believe to be authentic, as no instructions whatever had been sent to Lord Dorchester to the effect specified by the Hon. Gentleman.

Mr. Fox said, if the paper was a forgery, it could not be too soon known to be so. It had been published in America as authentic, and had tended much to render the people hostile to this country. If ministers could affirm that it was not authentic, that would be sufficient; but if they could only say they did not believe that Lord Dorchester had delivered any such answer, although, from all he knew of Lord Dorchester, he was ready to say he did not believe that Lord Dorchester would have done any thing that was likely to produce a war with America, without express orders from home, a formal disavowal of the paper was essentially necessary.

Mr. Dundas concurred in opinion with Mr. Fox as to the character of Lord Dorchester, to whose prudence and temperate conduct he was ready to bear testimony, being well convinced that Noble Lord was incapable of taking such a step without express instructions from home. He declared that he had never even heard of the paper before, and the supposition that any instructions to that effect had been given, was totally unfounded. On the contrary, ministers had used the utmost endeavours that circumstances would permit, to put an end to hostilities in which the American States were engaged with the Indians. With respect to the paper, he could only repeat, that he had never heard of it before.

Sir Francis Baring expressed his satisfaction at hearing this paper thus publicly contradicted; for having been published in America, and in that country considered to be true, it had all the effects of reality: From the date of it, the 10th of February, and the date of the period when the Americans laid an embargo on our shipping, the 27th of March, he conceived this paper to have been the cause of that injurious measure.

Mr. Wilberforce said, that a war with America would be of the utmost injury to a great number of his constituents, therefore

fore he should be averse to such an event, and he was happy that it was not likely to take place. If the paper had been, as the Right Hon. Gentleman supposed, the sole cause of their laying an embargo on our shipping, it would tend, in his opinion, to cement the friendship which subsisted between the two countries, when the Americans should discover it was unfounded, and that they had been made the dupes of some designing persons.

Sir Francis Baring said a few words in explanation.

Mr. M. Robinson hoped, that if it was found that ambassadors exceeded their instructions, by using language tending to create a misunderstanding between this country and any other, such conduct would not be passed over without notice, as was lately the case with Lord Auckland, who, in a paper published at the Hague, had used some very harsh expressions, for which he could not conceive that any authority had been given from home. The answer in question, if delivered from Lord Dorchester without express instructions, ought not to be passed over.

Mr. Sheridan said, he hoped he understood the Right Hon. Gentleman to say distinctly, that no instructions of a hostile nature had been given with regard to America; and that if the paper had been a forgery, of which he still entertained doubts, ministers had the wisdom and discretion to avoid a new war. One thing made him still think that the paper was authentic, which was, that it corresponded with what the Right Hon. Gentleman said with regard to the endeavour to conciliate a peace between the United States and the Indians. He wished to know if the Right Hon. Gentleman knew exactly what the paper was? It imported to be a reply from Lord Dorchester to the delegates of certain Indian Tribes. [Mr. Sheridan here read the whole reply*.] It set forth, that every means had been taken to establish a line of distinction between the territories of the American States and those of the King, according to the peace of 1783; that pacific means had hitherto been ineffectual to attain that object; and, from the conduct of the Americans on the borders, and what he had heard of their conduct towards the sea, he conceived it not probable that it would now be done. All the buildings and improvements made by the Americans beyond their line of demarcation must be the property of the King, and the present possessors be turned out, unless they consented to become his subjects. "You wish, my children, for a passport; a passport is not necessary in time of peace. But as you may expect a war before you return, I will grant you one, which will procure you a welcome from the warriors of the King your father, whether it be peace or war."

* Vide page 133.

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The reply concluded by observing, that the Americans had nearly exhausted the patience of this country. Mr. Sheridan said, that though this paper carried with it the appearance of authenticity, and was believed to be authentic by many persons conversant with American affairs, yet, as it had been publicly disavowed, he would beg leave, to withdraw his motion; which was agreed to.

MILITARY TESTS.

Mr. Sheridan rose, at the request of ministers, to make a motion which he had been under the necessity of deferring oftener than he could wish; but he trusted the delay would produce one good effect; because the measure required but little consideration to obtain assent. He could not presume, from any better authority than his own opinion, that it was the case; but he really could not perceive any possible objection to the measure, except the quarter whence it originated. It was a measure, he must acknowledge, that would have come with much more propriety from the other side of the House; and he had, for some time, a hope that they would have been of the same way of thinking, and prevented him the necessity of bringing it forward. That measure was, however, more likely to be successful, as it was totally unconnected with party, and had arisen incidentally from the circumstance of the Emigrant Corps Bill.

Another circumstance which he thought in favour of the Bill which he should have the honour to propose was, that it was not founded upon any petition or claim of that body of people for whose peculiar benefit it was intended; for at a time like the present, when his Majesty was calling for the aid of all descriptions of his subjects in support of the constitution, it might, perhaps, be improper in those persons to petition for even what they felt to be no more than justice, because such a petition might carry on the face of it something like a demand; and on the other hand, it might be as improper for Government to grant a voluntary offer of relief, because such an offer at that time might be considered as a bribe.

It was his opinion, *Mr. Sheridan* said, that all those penal statutes which make distinctions between one class of his Majesty's subjects and another, were distinctions which every man of good sense and humanity must wish to see done away one time or another, and which he should vote for abolishing at once, whenever any motion was made to that effect; but that he could not expect to see done at present. He was one of those men who respected the prejudices, as well as the rights, of the people, because he considered those prejudices as originally inspired and cherished by Government for wise and beneficial

beneficial purposes. When we were struggling for our constitution and religion against a Popish Prince, supported by a strong party in the country, whose religious and political opinions were equally hostile to civil liberty, great pains had been taken to create in the minds of the people a dread and abhorrence of trusting Roman Catholics with any share of power or authority. When such prejudices had been instilled, and after Government had reaped the benefit of them, he held that it would be highly unjust in Government to turn short round, and insult those very prejudices it had taken so much pains to create, and had so highly applauded; and tell the people at once, they should no longer entertain such foolish and ridiculous opinions. They propagated them to oppose a temporary danger, which no longer existed; therefore they must at this time dismiss them. That, however, was not now the case: The dangers apprehended from the Roman Catholics, and the prejudices against them, had vanished from the mind of every rational man.

The riots which happened in the year 1780, when a measure for the relief of the Roman Catholics was brought forward in that House, ought not to deter the House from adopting any measure in favour of them at this time: Those troubles did not arise from the mere apprehension of the relief to be granted to those people, but from an universal discontent which at that time prevailed against the general system of measures which were adopted, and from the criminal neglect of those whose duty it was to prevent them. In the last fourteen years, the progress of the spirit of toleration had been great; and it was at present more generally thought that men were rather too inattentive, than too apt to mark the difference in religious opinions. If, then, the danger and prejudices were both gone, which he believed would on all sides be admitted, it remained only to consider the inconvenience or advantage which could arise from allowing Roman Catholics in the army or navy in the same manner as any other of his Majesty's subjects. When we were embodying an army of French Catholics, did it not appear preposterous to exclude an English Catholic from serving his country in a military capacity? Indeed, that consideration first suggested to him the necessity of the present measure. It was preposterous in another instance to prevent the employing Roman Catholics in the army and navy in this country; for, by an Act passed the last year in the Irish Parliament, Catholics were permitted to serve in the army as officers under the rank of the staff. Supposing that any of these officers should be ordered upon duty to England, could any thing be more absurd and preposterous, than that

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that those men should be subject to heavy penalties for bearing the King's commission, which they did in strict conformity to the laws of their own country? It was in itself a circumstance so extravagantly ridiculous, that he was persuaded it would not have been suffered to exist so long, had not the attention of his Majesty's ministers been drawn off to matters more urgent, and more seriously important. That that was the case, he was warranted in saying, from a review of the proceedings in the Irish Parliament during the discussion of that question, to which it was strictly in order to refer. The authorities that he should quote were of high rank, and men that it might be supposed were made acquainted with the intentions of Government, Mr. Hobart and the Chancellor. When the Bill for the relief of the Irish Catholics was introduced into the Parliament of that kingdom, Mr. Hobart had observed, "that, with respect to the admission of Catholics into the army or navy, any change must depend upon England; that such a measure was in contemplation in England, and a communication had been made on the subject." And in a debate in the Upper House, on the clause for enabling Roman Catholics to accept of employments in the army and navy, Lord Farnham had started as an objection to the clause, "that, till a similar law was passed in England, Catholic officers could not attend their regiments, if ordered into England upon duty: He wished, therefore, that Catholics should not be eligible to military commissions, until the same principle should be adopted in England." In reply to that objection, the Lord Chancellor had said, "That the clause went merely to enable Roman Catholics to accept military employments; but it was not to be supposed that his Majesty would appoint men on such posts, before the laws of the empire should qualify them to act in every part of it; and that it was more than probable that a similar law would be passed in England before the expiration of two months." Such were the declarations of men in habits of official communication with his Majesty's ministers; and he therefore thought himself justified in supposing that the proposition he was now to make, was intended, and omitted to be done merely through an accidental want of leisure.

Catholics, Mr. Sheridan said, it was to be remembered, did not stand in the same situation with Protestant Dissenters in that respect; a Protestant Dissenter might, if he chose to run the risque of incurring the penalties, serve in the army, and the offer of his service would not be rejected. Besides, the Act which was annually passed in that House, allowing persons a longer time to qualify, afforded them some protection, while it was at the same time a proof of the injustice and inconsistency

consistency of these tests : But a Roman Catholic would be rejected if he made such an offer ; and at this moment there was a strong instance of the difference made between these two classes of dissenters. Mr. Weston, a Catholic Gentleman in Surry, of most respectable character and great influence in his neighbourhood, who had been nominated a Lieutenant-Colonel in one of the new corps, which he himself contributed largely to raise, had been superseded in his command, ministers not thinking it proper to allow his commission to be signed. This Gentleman was strongly attached to the Right Hon. Gentleman and his measures, in which, to be sure, he differed something from him : But was it not an extreme hardship, that the Roman Catholics, who were so distinguished for their fidelity, their loyalty, and attachment to the Government, should be deprived at that time, when his Majesty had called for the aid of all his subjects in person as well as in purse, of one great means of proving that loyalty and fidelity ?

It was notorious that the Roman Catholics, almost to a man, had contributed voluntarily to the necessities of their country, each according to his ability ; and yet those men, who gave every proof of attachment in their power to give, were to be refused the liberty of using arms in defence of their property and their country ! But he did not mean to pass any censure on Administration for refusing commissions to these men, because they acted in obedience to the law ; he wished only to ask them, was it fit that law should remain ? Another preposterous effect of that law against Roman Catholics was this : Supposing one of those commands usually filled by the senior officer became vacant on the Continent during the war, if the officer next in command chanced to be a Roman Catholic, to succeed to the command he must prove himself a Frenchman, for neither an Irish, or, what was more extraordinary, an English Catholic would be eligible, whilst a Frenchman, under the Emigrant Corps Bill, might succeed to any command in the army. He purposely avoided going into the general question of test acts and disqualifying laws ; he could wish to see them all erased from the statute books, to which, in his opinion, they were a foul disgrace ; but he would not attempt more than he thought would be likely to be granted, and had therefore confined himself to military and naval, leaving all civil employments to remain as they were. He was not either particular, as to the mode of attaining the object, if Gentlemen chose, rather than repeal military tests altogether, to repeal them only during the war, which might be done by extending the time allowed for qualification, or by framing a new oath to be taken

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by Catholics, such as he should have the honour of including in the Bill for which he should move, which contained a declaration of his Majesty's right to the Crown, an attachment to the constitution, and a promise to reveal all treasons. To any of these modes he should have no objection; his only wish was, that justice should be done to that very meritorious class of his Majesty's subjects. Mr. Sheridan concluded with moving for leave to bring in a Bill, and reading the form of the proposed oath—"I *A. B.* do swear, that I will bear true allegiance to his Majesty, and defend his right to the Crown, the laws, and constitution of these kingdoms, and the succession to the Throne, as by law established."

Mr. Secretary Dundas said, he certainly agreed with the sentiments of the Hon. Gentleman with regard to the loyalty and attachment of the Roman Catholics to the constitution, and was willing to give them their just tribute of applause: But it would readily occur to every Member of that House, that though the Hon. Gentleman had confined his speech to the case of the Roman Catholics, his motion included dissenters of every description, and went to the repeal of all religious tests whatever. That was a subject which had been more than once discussed in this House, and upon which it had often decided; therefore it was unnecessary, at that time, for him to deliver any opinion on its merits. He begged leave not to be understood as giving any opinion whatever upon the subject at that time, or saying how he should vote in case the question ever came before the House again. The present he did not conceive to be a proper time for advancing any such opinion: He should therefore move the *previous question*, which was, in his mind, the most proper one, when the period for discussing the principal question was improper.

Mr. Fox said, that he should not take up much of the time of the House upon the present occasion; but he had not heard any reply whatever from the Right Hon. Gentleman to that inconsistency stated by his Hon. Friend, *viz.* that of keeping Irish Catholics subject to the severest penalties in this country, who had accepted commissions under his Majesty in conformity with the laws of their own: To this he had heard no answer, for he believed it was unanswerable. The distinction made between the Catholics and Protestant Dissenters by that Right Hon. Gentleman, he could not pass over without a few remarks. In his opinion, the case of this class of men was extremely hard indeed. No men less merited harsh treatment, or were more justly entitled to all the privileges of Englishmen, than our brethren the Dissenters; for it was to them we owed more than to any other description of men—the constitution

tution we enjoyed, and which we so lavishly praised. They had ever shewn themselves ready to stand forth in defence of their country, when danger had threatened, and totally disregarded all thought of personal safety; and on that account, if on no other, he considered their situation a disgrace to the nation. In 1715 they were called on, and they answered the call. In 1745 they were called on, and they answered the call; and even in the present reign their services had been called for, which they as liberally granted. What was done after those men used such exertions for our benefit? An Act of Parliament was passed. To reward them for their services? No; but as an act of grace and pardon for the violation of the existing laws, which they had committed by taking up arms in so meritorious a cause as the defence of their King and country! While the delusion of Jacobitism prevailed, it was not, perhaps, altogether prudent to agitate their claims to national justice; but at this time, when it no longer existed, as the apprehension of danger of that kind was no more, the Legislature was bound in honour to remove the odious distinctions with which they were branded, more especially those which precluded them from serving their country in a military capacity. It was the duty of every government to preserve honour and integrity towards its subjects. Let the Country, therefore, draw the line: Either admit Dissenters to equal rights in time of peace, or give up their services in times of danger and necessity. Let them not continue to use these men in seasons of difficulty and distress, and deny them a share of their privileges in the season of security and happiness. As he understood the question at present, there seemed no objection in point of principle and propriety, but merely to the time of bringing it forward; he should therefore feel less regret at its being postponed by the previous question; but if not then, at least at some early period, let the stain be removed which tarnished both our national honour and our national honesty.

Mr. M. Robinson disapproved of the *previous question*, because it seemed to countenance the principle of the Hon. Gentleman's motion, to which he objected entirely, as an innovation dangerous in itself, and pregnant with dangerous consequences.

Mr. William Smith said, he should not trouble the House on the present occasion, were it not on account of what had fallen from the Right Hon. Gentleman (*Mr. Dundas*), respecting the Dissenters, who, though they might be pleased that such a Bill should pass, as tending in a certain degree to remove some portion of odious suspicion under which they at present seemed to live, had never been consulted on the subject

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ject by the Hon. Gentleman who brought it forward. He merely said this, that it might not be imagined that it had been brought forward at their suggestion, or at the suggestion of any Gentleman of that class in the House. The Dissenters certainly would be well pleased with free admission into the army and navy, as a proof that their attachment to the constitution was not suspected, but they did not desire to receive as a boon, what they might justly claim as a right. The Indemnity Bill, which had been passed whenever it had been thought necessary to require the services of those men, to shield them against the severity of the law, was a miserable subterfuge of Government, and a libel on the laws which rendered such a Bill necessary: Regardless of personal safety, and in defiance of every risque from the operation of those unjust laws, the Protestant Dissenters had ever been, and always would be, ready to stand forward in times of public danger and difficulty, in defence of their constitution and their country.

Mr. Sheridan said, that he understood the *previous question* in the same sense with the Hon. Member (Mr. Robinson), that it was not meant as an objection to the principle of the Bill, but to the time of its being brought forward, and therefore did not feel it incumbent upon him to take the sense of the House upon it. He could not be so absurd as to be ignorant that the Bill which he proposed did not include the Protestant Dissenters as well as the Catholics; it was intended for their relief only, as they were subject to the same grievance; the Bill granting further time to qualify, as it operated as a check upon the Test laws, enabled the Dissenters to accept of military and naval commissions. Were it not for the kindly interference of this Bill, we should be deprived of the services of many of the countrymen of the Right Hon. Gentleman, who were mostly of the *Kirk of Scotland*; we should be deprived of the services of many deserving officers now employed on the Continent;—Sir William Erskine, General Dundas, indeed all the Dundasses, were Dissenters; and we might lose the benefit of their exertions altogether. It seemed, however, that there still remained some apprehension of danger from granting any indulgence to Dissenters or Catholics. He begged to be informed, what bad consequences had arisen from the indulgence already granted to the Roman Catholics of this country? What evil consequences had followed the privileges granted the Roman Catholics of Ireland? Let him ask the Hon. and Learned Gentlemen of the long robe, if their profession had received an injury from the admission of Catholics to the bar? In none of these cases had any bad consequences followed, nor were they to be justly feared from the granting any future indulgence.

gence. He trusted that ministers only wished for some little time to consider the subject fully, and that they would themselves bring it forward early in the next Session of Parliament.

Mr. Fox said he would take that opportunity, as the House was pretty full, though it was not altogether regular, to give notice, that on Friday the 30th he should bring forward some resolutions on the state of the country with respect to the war, and which might be conducive to peace.

The Master of the Rolls professed himself happy to be called on to express his opinion, which he should not otherwise have done farther than by a silent vote; he should vote for the *previous question*; and should certainly have voted against the original motion, as going to an entire repeal of all tests, and consequently of the Test Act itself.

The *previous question* was put, and carried without a division.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, May 27.

Their Lordships returned from the High Court, held in Westminster-Hall, to their own Chamber at five o'clock, and after going through some private Bills, adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, May 27.

Received a message from the Lords, that their Lordships would proceed further in the Trial of Warren Hastings, Esq. on the 28th.

The Speaker then counted the House, and there being only seven Members present, they necessarily separated.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, May 28.

On their Lordships' return from Westminster-Hall, the Judges gave in their opinion on the Writ of Error, *Gibson* and *Johnson* versus *Hunter*, when the further consideration was deferred until Friday the 30th.—Adjourned.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, May 28.

The Insolvent Debtor, the Penitentiary House, and the Slave Carrying Bills, were read a third time, and passed.
Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, May 30.

MOTION FOR PEACE.

The Order of the Day being read,

The Duke of Bedford called the attention of their Lordships to the discussion of the important subject on which the House had been summoned. The Duke, in opening the discussion, entered into a recapitulation of the leading circumstances of the war. It was his design, he said, to bring to their Lordships' recollection the several stages of the unfortunate war in which we were engaged, so as to shew the views in which it had been entertained by Government and the Legislature, the different aspects that it had assumed at different times, and finally to point out the utter impossibility at this moment to draw any specific conclusion from the conduct of Administration, of what their real intentions in the war were, or to limit the calamity to any object, the attainment of which would satisfy their wishes. In executing this task he should find it necessary to intreat their Lordships to examine the situation of affairs both at home and abroad, and rigorously to inquire whether they had any well-founded hopes that the system which they were pursuing, and the means which they had taken to accomplish it, were likely to produce any beneficial object whatever to this country, much less the object which was affected to be that which they had in view. He intended to propose some resolutions for their Lordships' assent, which might be offered with propriety, since both the object and the nature of the war were changed. Their Lordships would remember that hostilities were avowedly commenced to prevent the navigation of the Scheldt, and to guarantee our allies, the Dutch, from the invasion of the French. Both these purposes were early completed, and therefore as the most distant apprehensions of danger no longer could attach to either, some propositions for peace on the part of Great Britain might long ere this have been expected. Their Lordships would be able

to enter more clearly into the discussion by hearing the propositions which he meant to submit to their consideration; he would therefore read them in his place. The Duke here read the resolutions which he meant to submit to the House; and he accompanied them with observations on each. That our readers may see them collected in one point, we here insert a copy from the Journals:

"Resolved, I. That it appears to this House, that during the several changes which took place in the constitution and government of France, before the commencement of hostilities, and more particularly after the events of the 10th of August 1792, when his Majesty was advised by his ministers to suspend all official communication with France, it was, and continued to be, the professed principle and policy of his Majesty's government, carefully to observe a strict neutrality, and uniformly to abstain from any interference with respect to the internal affairs of France. That when his Majesty was advised to make a further augmentation of his forces by sea and land at the beginning of the last year, it was for the declared purpose of opposing views of aggrandisement and ambition on the part of France; and that when his Majesty acquainted Parliament, that acts of hostility had been directed by the Government of France against his Majesty's subjects, and after war had been declared against his Majesty and the United Provinces, the then avowed object of prosecuting the war on our part, was to oppose all views of further aggrandisement imputed to France, and that the prosecution of the war on this ground, and for the attainment of this object, was approved by both Houses of Parliament.

"Resolved, II. That it appears to this House, that at, or before, the end of April 1793, the armies of France were obliged to evacuate Holland and Flanders, and to retire within their own territory; and that the Prince of Cobourg, Commander in Chief of the Emperor's forces in Flanders, did, on the 5th of April, engage and declare that he would join and co-operate with General Dumourier, to give to France her constitutional King, and the constitution which she had formed for herself; and that the Prince of Cobourg did also then declare, on his word of honour, that if any strong places should be delivered over to his troops, he should consider them no otherwise than as sacred deposits; and that on the 9th of the same month, all the preceding declarations of the Prince of Cobourg were revoked.

"Resolved, III. That it appears to this House, that, by the 15th article of the treaty concluded with the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, on the 10th of April 1793, his Majesty's ministers were of opinion, that the situation of affairs had then entirely changed its aspect, in consequence of which his Majesty might not have occasion for the Hessian troops, and might be at liberty to relinquish their service, on certain conditions of compensation to be made to the Landgrave.

"Resolved, IV. That it appears to this House, that, on the 14th of July 1793, a convention was concluded between his Majesty and the King of Prussia,

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Prussia, in which their Majesties reciprocally promised to continue to employ their respective forces, as far as their circumstances would permit, in carrying on a war equally just and necessary.

"Resolved, V. That it appears to this House, that, on the 23d of August 1793, Lord Hood declared to the people of Toulon, that he had no other view than that of restoring peace to a great nation, upon the most just, liberal, and honourable terms. That the inhabitants of Toulon did, in return, declare, that it was their unanimous wish to adopt a Monarchical Government, such as it was originally formed by the *Constituent Assembly of 1789*; and that Lord Hood, by his Proclamation of the 28th of August, accepted of that Declaration, and did then repeat what he had already declared to the people of the South of France, that he took possession of Toulon, and held it in trust only for Louis the XVIIth."

Here, his Grace observed, that it was unnecessary for him to remind their Lordships, that it was the first proof which ministers gave, through their agent, Lord Hood, of their fixed intention to interfere with the government of France. That House had acceded to that proposal, which was a declaration in favour of monarchy, as explicit and unequivocal as any that could be made by man. The Declaration of Lord Hood, it was material to recollect for the honour of the country, demanded that it should be clearly seen upon what principles the Noble Lord acted, what terms he proposed, and into what engagements he entered on behalf of his Majesty. It was a fact recorded in the Noble Lord's own words in the paper on the table, that he accepted of their declaration of a wish to adopt a monarchical government, such as it was originally formed by the *Constituent Assembly*; and that he declared to the people of the South of France, that he should protect those who manifested their sentiments, and pledged the faith of the Government of England to the honest and unequivocal maintenance of the object of their declaration. The invitation which he gave to the people of the South of France, to declare themselves, was accepted; the people in consequence did repair to the standard which he had erected; and the Noble Lord, on the 28th of August, solemnly accepted of their declaration; and thus a specific ground and object of the war was held out to the people of France, and the faith of Great Britain was pledged to that people for this clear and specific object of the war.

"Resolved, VI. That it appears to this House, that the constitution, to which the declaration and acceptance stated in the preceding Resolution are applied, was the same which his Majesty's Ambassador at the Hague did, in a Memorial presented to the States General of the 25th of January 1793, describe in the following terms, *viz.* "It is not quite four years since certain miscreants, assuming the name of philosophers, have presumed to

think themselves capable of establishing a new system of civil society; in order to realize this dream, the offspring of vanity, it became necessary for them to overturn and destroy all established notions of subordination, of morals, and of religion;" and that this description was applied by the said Ambassador to a Government with which his Majesty continued to treat and negotiate from its institution in 1789, to its dissolution in August 1792; and that his Majesty's Ambassador was not recalled from Paris until that Government was dissolved."

Their Lordships, his Grace remarked, had heard these words mentioned before, and they were such, he presumed, as must excite their warmest reprobation. He called upon their Lordships to figure to themselves, and consult their own feelings, if such words were uttered by any foreign minister against our own glorious constitution; if such calumnies were indecently levelled against that, would they not be received with universal and merited indignation? On this occasion, we must have appeared odious in the eyes of that nation. By the Memorial presented to the States General on the 25th of January 1793, the persons who made the constitution which we pledged ourselves by Lord Hood's declaration to assist in re-establishing, were described as "miscreants, assuming the name of philosophers," and which was reviled as the offspring of vanity and licentiousness. He was surprised that this and other declarations of the same kind did not produce indignation and abhorrence in every one of their Lordships, as a conduct utterly incompatible with the principles of all true and legitimate government, and particularly so, of a government founded on the basis of liberty, and a people who had previously exercised the right of forming a government for themselves. He was astonished that any mind, capable of estimating the blessings of independence, did not revolt from the idea of dictating to another independent people what government they should chuse, or of interfering in the settlement of their internal concerns. If the most despotic minister of the most despotic Sovereign in Europe had chosen to interfere at the time of the happy Revolution of Great Britain, and had published similar declarations to the present, he asked their Lordships deliberately to consider what must have been the feelings of Englishmen on the occasion? Human nature was the same in similar circumstances every-where. Animated with the desire of delivering themselves from a state of the most abject bondage, they would naturally have contemplated the interference of foreign powers, as a violation of their rights, and as an outrage not to be forgiven. If no people could endure such insult, if for the time they might be too weak to assert and maintain their rights, they would watch for a more suitable

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suitable occasion; the memory of the act would rankle in their breasts; they would treasure it as a subject of rooted enmity, and as a just cause for going to war the instant that they had the means. The French were said to be the original declarers of the war, and it was called upon our parts a defensive war. It was of little concern who were the first declarers, in comparison of who were the first provokers; and he called upon their Lordships to say, whether the French could truly consider this country as their friends, and whether we could look back to these preliminary steps in the war with any satisfaction to ourselves, either as to the right, the moderation, or the policy we had exercised?

"Resolved, VII. That it appears to this House, by the Declaration made by his Majesty's ministers, and dated on the 29th of October 1793, "That his Majesty demands only of France, that some legitimate and stable government should be established, founded on the acknowledged principles of universal justice, and capable of maintaining with other powers the accustomed relations of union and peace;" and that his Majesty, in treating for the re-establishment of general tranquillity with such a Government, "would propose none other than equitable and moderate conditions, not such as the expences, the risks, and the sacrifices of the war might justify;" and that his Majesty hoped to find in the other powers engaged with him in the *common cause*, sentiments and views perfectly conformable to his own."

The next Resolutions referred to the means which we had taken, and to the co-operation we had secured for the conduct of the war. His Majesty, his Grace said, by the seventh declaration, certainly expected to find the other powers at war accord in these sentiments; but from the conduct of the other powers, that he was deceived was evident from their manifestoes and declarations. By this declaration we did not bind ourselves to continue the war till the restoration of monarchy, but had said that we could not make peace till a stable government was established, which could give us security that peace would be permanent. With regard to the stability of their government, he thought no man could answer for it; but, with regard to the permanence of peace, he thought any man might answer for it. He had not the least doubt that if proper overtures were made, the people of France would force their government to make peace, and he had as little doubt that the people of England desired it.

"Resolved, VIII. That it appears to this House, that, at the commencement of the war, the prosecution of it was considered by his Majesty, as a cause of *general concern*, in which his Majesty had *every reason* to hope for the cordial co-operation of those powers who were united with his Majesty by the ties of alliance, and who felt an interest in the same cause,

"Resolved, IX. That it does not appear to this House, that, in the prosecution of the war, considered by his Majesty as a *cause of general concern*, and as a *common cause*, his Majesty has received that *cordial co-operation* which we were led to expect from those powers who were united with him by the ties of alliance, and who were supposed to feel an interest in the same cause,

"Resolved, X. That, on a review of the conduct of the several powers of Europe, from whom, if the cause was *common*, and if the concern was *general*, such cordial co-operation might have been expected, it appears to this House, that many of those powers have not co-operated with his Majesty; that the Empress of Russia has not contributed in any shape to the support of this common cause; that the Crowns of Sweden and Denmark have united to support their neutrality, and to defend themselves against any attempt to force them to take part in this common cause; that Poland is neither able nor inclined to take part in it; that Switzerland and Venice are neutral; that the King of Sardinia has required and obtained a subsidy from Great Britain, to enable him to act even on the defensive; that the King of the Two Sicilies, professing to make a common cause with his Majesty in the war against France, is bound to it by nothing but his own judgment, *in the course of events which may occur*, and that he is at liberty to abandon the common cause *whenever he shall judge that he cannot any longer with justice and dignity continue the war*; that the efforts of Spain and Portugal have been completely ineffectual."

Here the Noble Duke said, in support of this Resolution, it was scarcely necessary for him to call their Lordships' attention to the conduct of the Empress of Russia, who had actually engaged in the alliance, but had rendered no assistance whatever. She had promised, it was true, a liberal aid; but, after she had encouraged the allies to engage in their present unfortunate project, she remained a silent spectator, and without participating in a single misfortune. It had been said, that England had armed in the common cause of all nations; but this was a weak position, and scarcely deserving of refutation. If ministers would, however, persist in its being a common cause, he would tell them what they too well knew, that America, Sweden, and Denmark, were neutral in the business; Poland could not, nor would even if she could, assist. The King of Naples had a saving clause in his treaty with this country, by which he could withdraw from the war whenever he pleased, whether it pleased us or not. Venice and Genoa would not engage in the contest. The King of Sardinia was subsidized for preserving his own dominions from the incursions of the French; and the assistance given by Spain and Portugal was ineffectual. How then could ministers presume to call that a common cause in which many were neutral? Most were forced into the confederacy; and the remainder,

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he believed, were now completely tired of the business. If any argument were necessary to enforce this truth, he would request their Lordships to look to the conduct of the King of Prussia. He was the first to declare war against France, and, by the convention of 1793, he bound himself to pursue the war as a principal, which he did, until his famous declaration of April 1794, when his Britannic Majesty was obliged to grant him an exorbitant subsidy, the most exorbitant the country ever experienced, to induce him to act even as an auxiliary, in that cause in which he was the first to embark. The subsidy which we had been drawn in to give him, nearly double of what was ever paid to any foreign power, therefore was evidently extorted from us by something like a threat upon his part of withdrawing from the war. As the war had been pronounced the common cause of all civilized states, was not, he asked, the Emperor as much bound as this kingdom to contribute to the expence, the salvation of whose country, it had been asserted, depended on the destruction of France? Previous to the subsidizing of Prussia, we had heard the Court of Berlin declaim against French principles; principles which it said would promote anarchy, and overturn all government. The King, however, saw the absurdity of such expressions, and, regardless of the consequence, he threatened to retire from the war, and England became the dupe of his conduct. Thus might we in the end be obliged to bear the whole expence of the war; and he appealed to their Lordships whether we were either prepared or able to sustain such a burden? Viewing, therefore, the discordance, the inequality, exertion, and the wasted state of the allies, together with the fruitless attempts already made, and still making, he thought the object of the war both unattainable, and pregnant, in its consequences, with the most big and awful calamities to this country. From these reasons it was, that he thought it his duty to endeavour to avert misfortune from his country, by moving the resolutions which he had the honour of submitting to their Lordships. What must people think of a kingdom that can act thus absurdly? What must they say? but that we were a foolish and unthinking nation, ready to purchase the assistance of Prussia (who had no objection to enlist as a mercenary in this crusade) at any price, and throw away the treasures of the country on every chimerical occasion that offered? How could we reconcile the inconsistency of our conduct to the people of England? a people friendly to liberty, and adverse to oppression. How could we look on with a degree of unjustifiable apathy, and behold a patriotic prince expending his treasures in support of the liberties of Poland, without rushing

ing to his aid, when an inhuman war had been declared against that loyal and brave people? Their liberties, while in imminent danger, did not excite in the breast of his Majesty's ministers any noble sentiment that might urge them to interfere in behalf of a cruelly-treated, though high-spirited, nation. How could they, on one side, turn their back on humanity, and on the other declare, that they were humanely engaged in fighting the common cause of all civilized nations?

Incessant appeals were made to their Lordships' feelings in favour of a war that had for its object the preservation of order, of religion, and humanity; it would be well, however, for their Lordships to recollect, whether, in our very conduct to the King of Prussia, we did not act upon the contrary principle, and pay him a subsidy only to enable him to wage the most cruel and inhuman war that ever was undertaken against any people. When we had the cry of humanity for ever in our mouths, it would be well that we felt its true and genuine emotions. While we stood by to see the people of Poland, loyal, faithful to their neighbours, respectful to the rights of nations, and honourable in every part of their conduct, made the savage prey of our allies; nay, when we granted extravagant subsidies to enable our allies to prosecute their injustice with effect, to trample upon the necks of this brave and gallant people, without remorse and without pity, what pretension had we to the true feeling of humanity? or how could we claim to ourselves praise for honest and conscientious regards to the well-being of society? If we made it a plea, that the principles of the French tended to attack the independence of nations, and that no neighbouring power was safe from their restless ambition and their arrogant tyranny, could we shut our eyes to the same practices in the conduct of those powers with whom we were leagued? Did we not assist those powers in assailing the independence of their neighbours, in trampling down order, in confounding establishments, and in spreading ruin and desolation over whole countries? It was idle and hypocritical to assume the pretext of humanity in the one instance, while we laughed it to scorn in the other. There was no integrity in our proceeding. One part of the war of Europe was at variance in its principle with the other. The pretended defender of social order, and of national independence, in one place, was the assailant and violator of independence in another; and while the people of this country were taught to believe that it was for virtue, and religion, and humanity, that we were at war, they were called upon for a subsidy to one of our allies, enormous beyond all precedent in British

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"Resolved, XI. That, with respect to the powers who were principals in the present war (viz. the States General, the King of Prussia, and the Emperor), it appears to this House, that the States General, having refused to contract for the payment of their portion of the subsidies to be paid to the King of Prussia, beyond the term of the present year, have thereby reserved to themselves a right to withdraw from the support of the war at that period, and to throw the whole burden of it upon Great Britain. That the King of Prussia, being bound by the convention of July 1793, to act in the most perfect concert and the most intimate confidence with his Majesty, upon all the objects relative to the present war; and having then promised to continue to employ his forces, as far as circumstances would permit, in carrying on the war; and his Majesty having since been obliged, by the treaty of the 19th of April 1794, to grant to the King of Prussia an enormous subsidy, in order to engage him to continue to co-operate in the prosecution of the war, it follows that the King of Prussia is no longer a principal party, nor even an auxiliary in the said war, but that he basely lends out his troops to this country, in return for a most profitable pecuniary compensation, at our expence; and that Great Britain is, in fact, loaded with his proper share of the burden of a war, which is said to be the common cause of every civilized state. Finally, that if it were expedient, or necessary, to purchase the King of Prussia's co-operation on such terms, the Emperor, whose interests are more directly at stake, was full as much bound in reason and justice as his Majesty, or the States General could be, to contribute equally to that expence; and that if, at any future period of the war, the Emperor's finances should be so exhausted as to make it impossible for him to maintain it on his part, at his own charge, his Imperial Majesty will be invited and encouraged, if not justified, by the example and success of the King of Prussia, to call upon this country to defray the whole expence of whatever army he may continue to employ against the French; nor does it appear to this House, by what distinction in policy or in argument, the terms granted to the King of Prussia can be refused to the Emperor, whose efforts and expences, in the course of the war, have infinitely exceeded those of Prussia; or how this country can, in prudence or with safety, decline a compliance with such demands, if it be true, as has been declared, that the destruction of the present French government is essential to the security of every thing which is most dear and valuable to us as a nation.

"Resolved, XII. That it appears to this House, that in consequence of the events of the war on the continent and elsewhere, all views of aggrandisement and ambition on the part of France, supposing the French to entertain such views, are evidently unattainable, and must be relinquished by France; and that, therefore, the object of the war, as it was originally professed on our part, viz. the restoration of peace on terms of permanent secu-

security, is now attainable, and may be secured, provided that, on one side, the French shall be content with the possession and safety of their own country, and that we, on the other, shall adhere to the principle of justice and policy, so often declared by his Majesty, and avowed by his ministers, of *uniformly abstaining from any interference with respect to the internal affairs of France.*

"Resolved, XIII. That it is the duty of his Majesty's ministers to avail themselves of the present circumstances of the war, and to promote a pacification by every means in their power, by proposing to France equitable and moderate conditions, and, above all things, by *abstaining from any interference in the internal affairs of France.*

"Resolved, XIV. That it is the opinion of this House, that in every possible case, it is equally desirable that his Majesty should make an explicit declaration of his views. If it is the intention not to interfere in the internal government of France, nothing can contribute so much to advance a negotiation with those who now exercise the power of government in that country, as such a declaration solemnly and explicitly made. If, on the other hand, it is intended to interfere, it is highly essential to make the degree of interference precisely known, to induce such parts of the French nation as are dissatisfied with the present government, to unite and exert themselves with satisfaction and security."

These Resolutions, the Duke said, referred to the object of the war as it was originally professed on our side, namely, the restoration of peace on terms of permanent security. This had been the first declared intention of this country in the war. It ought undoubtedly to be our uniform object; and this, in his mind, could only be obtained by proposing to France equitable and moderate conditions. Above all, as the means of coming to a proper understanding, a precise and direct declaration should be made, solemnly and explicitly stating the objects that we had in view, and thus finally to clear away all the misunderstandings to which our former conduct had given rise during the war. Their Lordships would perceive that these Resolutions were generally declarations of facts, recorded on their Journals, or taken from public papers, which had been laid upon their table.

Having thus gone through his string of Resolutions, his Grace called upon their Lordships to observe, that, drawn as they were from the official documents on the table, and briefly recapitulating the declarations that had been made from time to time, they presented to the attentive mind various important contradictions—contradictions with regard to our object, contradictions with regard to our allies, and to the means which we had for the pursuit of the war. He had faithfully copied them from those documents, and he was mistaken if they ought not to have a serious influence on their Lordships,

as to the conclusions to be drawn from them. His Grace shewed, from the collection of state papers, that the Prince of Saxe Cobourg, in April 1793, had joined with Dumourier in an avowed attempt to restore the constitution of 1789, though it was that constitution against which the war had been begun. The proclamation of Saxe Cobourg was dated on the 5th of April, and, among many other professions, stated, that,

"If General Dumourier shall desire it, the Prince of Saxe Cobourg will join a part of his troops, or all his army, to the French army, to co-operate as friends and brothers in arms, worthy of reciprocal esteem; to give to France her constitutional King, the constitution she had formed for herself, and of course to rectify it, if the nation shall find it imperfect; and to revive in France, as well as all the rest of Europe, peace, confidence, tranquillity, and happiness. He declares, in consequence, upon his word of honour also, that he will not come upon the French territory to make conquests, but solely and truly for the end above specified."

This proclamation the Duke opposed to that of the same Prince of Saxe Cobourg, dated from his head quarters at Mons, in four short days after, viz. on the 9th of April, wherein he totally revokes and annuls all that he had antecedently declared, by the direction, as it is supposed, of the Austrian cabinet. Though he had thus again declared against the constitution of 1789, it did not appear, however, that all the allies who were co-operating with him were of the same sentiment; for, a few months afterwards, Lord Hood consented to support the Toulonese, in restoring monarchy and that very constitution. General Würmser, who, on Dumourier's defection, had called his "the cause of the constitution of 1789, the good cause," had again, in a few months after Lord Hood's declaration, refused not only to contend for that constitution, but had likewise refused to hold places in Alsace for Louis XVII. and had insisted that his conquests on the Rhine should be restored to the German empire.

With regard, more particularly, to the conduct of Great Britain, it had, if possible, been more inconsistent than that of any other of the allies. This was originally professed to be a war of defence on our part; but when the French were driven from the Austrian Netherlands into their own territories, the war was still pursued with increased eagerness, though the object of it had changed, and it had become a war of offence. We had assisted Austria to make conquests for herself, while we had not only taken possession of some of the

French colonies for ourselves, but had also shewn a desire of gaining something in Europe.

He would not say much of the proceedings before we interfered in the war; the rise of the French revolution had been so often a subject of discussion in that House, that it was certainly unnecessary for him to dwell upon it. To whatever other causes it might be assigned, it was chiefly to be ascribed, in his opinion, to the part which France took in the American war. It originated with the men who were sent to the continent of America to assist that people in their struggle with us. There they imbibed the principles of freedom; there they first drank at the delicious fountain of independence; and, elated with the prosperous issue of that struggle, they returned, burning with an enthusiastic ardour for the deliverance of their native land. Soon after the monarch met his people. By all the accounts that he had ever heard, he was good and beneficent, he was eager for the welfare of his people, and he honestly wished to favour a melioration of their condition. It was not wonderful that men, attached to ancient prejudices, and bred under the ancient system, should be prone to take alarm at the reforms which were introduced: In fact, they were too prone, and relinquished their country, rather than submit to a temperate reform. Yet the revolution proceeded for some time with unexampled quiet: Probably a revolution never had been brought about with so little bloodshed; and it was a memorable fact, that for a considerable time the country remained in a state of great order, security, and peace. Speculative men afterwards attempted to form a system too pure for the present state of society. Still, though its theories were too perfect and fine for the condition of men at this day, yet practice would have softened down those theories, and would have made it one of the most extraordinary and grand structures that was ever formed by man. This, however, was an idea which he knew would be scouted by those who thought that no man could be happy who did not live by the will of another. While employed on this great and important work, they certainly manifested no hostility to other nations; they propagated no doctrines injurious to the peace or safety of other powers; and, unless some trifling and insignificant disputes about boundaries, nothing happened that could be said justly to excite the jealousy of other nations. Two of the great powers of Europe, however, the principles of whose government were purely despotic, affected to see the progress of this revolution with alarm. They thought it was impossible for men to be happy, who governed themselves by rules of action

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agreed on by themselves; and having the foundations of their own power laid upon undisputed despotism, they affected to see, with jealousy and dread, the establishment of a government on the more rational principles of liberty and freedom. They laid the foundation of all that has followed; they begun the career into which we and other nations had been brought; and to them posterity will look for all the horrors that have followed. The constitution of 1789 was formed by men of the first rank, both in distinction and talents; their motives were pure, and their end was laudable; they followed the noblest examples of history; they were eager to deliver their country from despotism, but they were actuated by the purest loyalty to their sovereign, and respect for civil rights. How had these men been received in foreign countries? He blushed to think what outrages had been committed on these persons, on Monsieur la Fayette in particular, who professedly retired from France because he would not sacrifice his loyalty to his King. When he found his efforts not only ineffectual, but attended with great personal danger, he fled into a neutral country, in the full conviction of finding the laws of nations observed by those who professed to be warring for reason, religion, order, equity, and justice, and of passing the remainder of his days in tranquillity. The laws of nations had, however, been openly violated by the powers at war with France. The treachery which M. de la Fayette experienced from persons professing themselves engaged in the cause of humanity, was such as must disgust every gentleman of feeling. He who ventured his existence to save the life of his unfortunate Sovereign, had been arrested like a common felon, with his friend, and dragged the Lord knew where. They had no right to dispute the veracity of Monsieur la Fayette, for his whole life was an illustration of truth, disinterestedness, and honour. Yet though retiring the victim of loyalty, he was doomed to dungeon after dungeon, and was at length transferred from a Prussian to some Austrian dungeon and hospital. Whether dungeon or hospital, it was, indeed, the same thing; in his person liberty was thus wounded in the most outrageous manner. The spirit of liberty, that still glowed in every Englishman's breast, his Grace said, must reprobate his persecutors and oppressors, while M. de la Fayette's name would live in the brightest page of history, and be transmitted down to the latest posterity, pure and unfulfilled, and posterity would do justice to his character. That there was much to blame in the system of liberty first adopted in France, much to correct, much to alter, was certain. What a work, however, was a system of government! and how impossible was it, that human wisdom could make it perfect in a day!

day! Subsequent to the King's death, every species of horror, to which humanity could be subjected, had passed on the devoted scene of France. Their Lordships' hearts had been often torn with the melancholy recital! Noble Lords thought it necessary to dwell with emphasis on the shocking events that crowded on one another, and that filled every bosom with horror, indignation, pity, and disgust, as the feelings were roused against the tyrants, or turned towards the victims. But had not the allied powers urged them on to all these savage acts? Had they not been pressed on from cruelty to cruelty, from murder to murder, goaded, hunted, set upon like beasts of prey, and rendered desperate in the toils? Had they not taught them, that nothing but their extermination would satisfy the courts of Europe? Had they not made a solemn declaration against their lives, that nothing but their blood could give security to Europe? And having thus demanded, in the face of France, the lives of their leaders, the men who had given to them, however they might at present exercise it, the sweets of liberty, could it be expected that they would deliver up their leaders, or stand by, and tamely see them torn from their sides? How absurd, he remarked, it was to suppose that people would sacrifice their leaders, to humour the caprice of their enemies, when they had no fixed plan; when no specific object had been declared! As long as this was the case, there was no prospect but eternal war. To destroy the government (continued his Grace) you must destroy the French system, you must destroy French principles, you must destroy the people; and he entreated the impartial opinion of their Lordships, whether, judging from all that had passed, and from all that was passing, such an expectation could be entertained by any reasonable man. "My Lords (said the Duke), let us not deceive ourselves, let us not be made the dupes of our own declamation; before we bring these people to the tribunal of justice, let us be sure that our own hearts are free from the crimes that we affect to abhor; let us be sure that we have not created the fury which has produced these horrors; and let us coolly and deliberately inquire, as friends of that humanity which is so incessantly our theme, if we should not better promote the object of restoring France to the happiness of order, tranquillity, and government, if, instead of rendering its leaders furious and desperate, we were to make a specific declaration, that we had no desire of interfering in their domestic concerns, and did not presume to arrogate to ourselves the right to dictate what should be their government, or who should be their governors."

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It was the friends of despotism in France, he insisted, who laid the foundation of every horror that succeeded the revolution. It was to them that all the massacres must be attributed, that all men must deplore. It was they who instructed the people to distrust a good and humane King, who, they made them believe, was so shackled by his Nobility, and so wrapt in old prejudices, that he could not fulfil what a momentary expediency obliged him to grant to his people. The conduct of the allies conspired with other causes to bring about a second revolution; and the allies excited many of those horrors which their Lordships had been in the habit of reprobating.

The Duke next proceeded to speak of the arguments which were urged in favour of the war from the state of things in this country. It was said, that we went to war to prevent the introduction of Jacobin principles into England. How it was possible to prevent the introduction of principles he could not easily perceive. That it could be possible to prevent the introduction of Jacobins, was certain. What bars or bolts, what engineering or artillery, could prevent the inroad of principles, he knew not. This was not a country to be invaded by doctrines contrary to human reason: Sentiments favourable to liberty, he thanked God, were not new to the people of England; sentiments that cherished licentiousness would be received by no people who were not under the torture of oppression; it was only when the mind was suffering from despotism that it was driven to desperate courses; the truest and most secure barrier against licentiousness was a rational system of freedom. What had produced all the intemperance of those doctrines which were defined by the term of Jacobinism, but the system of oppression and tyranny under which the people of France had formerly been doomed to live? What were the means of preventing similar doctrines from taking root in the breasts of Englishmen? The securing to them the enjoyment of the privileges derived from the constitution. "Let us then, my Lords (said the Duke), look at home, instead of declaiming against the French; let us take care that we are not, by rash experiments on the temper of the people, laying the seeds of discontent and disorder. It is a melancholy consideration, that the alarm which has been so industriously spread against French principles, has been the preface to pursuing French principles ourselves. We are daily breaking through those strong fences that give confidence to the minds of Englishmen, and that have taught them to be proud of the system under which they live; that reverence for the constitution, which is the source both of obedience and energy, is daily diminished by the stratagems to which resort has been had,

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and by the rash and violent measures which have been adopted. Look at the laws which have been made since this alarm was excited, and see if they are calculated to endear Englishmen to their native land? When laws are made, or when laws are repealed, by the three branches of the Legislature, they ought to be so done upon mature deliberation. The necessity ought to be made manifest to the world; there ought not only to be no juggling, no trick, no delusion practised, but there ought to be no appearance of precipitation; there ought to be none of that haste which can stamp a statute with the character of rashness. My Lords (added his Grace) I recommend to you to reflect on your late acts, and subject them to this test. In the first place, Parliament was summoned to meet the year before last on a false pretext. Your Lordships will always recollect, that, in speaking of the acts of Government, I speak of them as the acts of ministers. The law required, to the summoning of a Parliament on such short notice, that there should be either an insurrection, or a threatened invasion. There was no invasion, and thus Parliament was summoned together against law. There was no insurrection, for ministers had not found a single public or private traitor to bring to trial. Here, then, was an act of Government in direct contradiction of positive law; and the more closely the matter was examined, the more it would be found that ministers had gone great lengths. The next breach of law was in a body of Hessian troops being kept in this country." [Lord Grenville, and other Lords, said the Hessian troops were gone]. The Noble Duke said it was of no importance to his argument, whether these foreign troops were still here, or whether they had been at length withdrawn. Ministers might be tired of infringing the law of the land, but they had infringed it; they had brought them here, they had kept them here, against the known spirit of the English constitution.

The next thing that he should mention might, perhaps, his Grace said, be thought trivial by some persons; but every man, who observed the progress of human affairs accurately, knew that, from things seemingly trivial in themselves, effects often flowed, which led to dreadful consequences. When once a foundation was laid for error, however trivial the first step might be, the bewildered mind was easily led on from gradation to gradation, and every step was more important than the former. The matter to which he alluded had happened but four days ago. Their Lordships, in direct violation of a standing order of the House, had proceeded to pass through a most important Bill in one day. The wisdom of their ancestors had laid it down as a lasting rule, that no such precipi-

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precipitation should be practised. How essential it was to the well-being of society, to the dignity as well as to the effect of their proceedings, that this rule should be strictly observed, he needed not to say; but because it was found that it had once been violated before, their Lordships chose to break it again. One breach of order was to justify another breach; and thus the people at large were taught to believe, that all their boasted respect for principles was affectation, and that they had no scruple in departing from the most established rules, when it happened to accommodate a present occasion. He thought it his duty to point out these facts to their Lordships, as tending to implant on the minds of men a feeling unfavourable to that order, obedience, reverence for the constitution, and abhorrence of change, which it was so much the fashion to profess to propagate. These facts were calculated to inculcate in every observant mind the idea, that while we were railing at French doctrines, we did not disdain to pursue them; that we held in contempt both the voice of reason and the voice of the people; and that, in utter defiance of all deliberative wisdom, every thing was made to give way to the imperious vote of an overbearing majority.

Another measure, that had been too successfully pursued, had tended not less to engender discontent, animosity, and disorder. The association of placemen and pensioners, which bred and fostered swarms of spies and informers, was so opposite to the genuine system of the British Government, so detestable to the frank hearts and candid minds of Englishmen, so destructive of the openness, generosity, truth, and freedom of the national character, that it was a measure of the grossest impolicy. That men should be appointed to watch over the levities of conversation, the unguarded moments of conviviality, and to treasure up and give information of perhaps the hasty expressions of passion, excited by the irksome penalties of revenue laws, or by the sufferings which the burdens of these very wars have brought upon industry (passion excited perhaps by the person's having lost his all), his furniture, his tools, perhaps, taken to satisfy the taxes brought upon him by the increasing burdens of the State; and for these expressions of momentary passion, wrung from him by agony, that persons of this kind should be dragged into a court of justice, was a horror at which the heart of a free man must revolt. Thank God, the horror went no further. They had been brought into courts of justice indeed, but, in general, the proper feelings of their fellow-citizens had urged them to act as became Englishmen; they had, in general, acquitted them; and by their verdict of *Not-guilty*, had given the most unequivocal rebuke

rebuke to the oppression of such a charge. But what must be the emotion raised in the breasts of that very jury, when even their verdict was not sufficient to give deliverance to the object of persecution; and when they found that the prisoner was not able to quit the bar without the leave and the reproach of the Judge? These things were surely not calculated to preserve in the minds of men, that admiration of the constitution, that love and reverence for our laws, that it was so desirable to inculcate.

The Duke at length came to the immediate question of the war. It was argued, that it was impossible to make peace, on account of the speeches that had been delivered in the National Convention, and from the reports of Barrere, in which it had been stated, that propositions had been made, through our minister at the Swiss Cantons, and that they had rejected all proposals of pacification with disdain. If the reports of Barrere, and the speeches in the British Parliament, were to be considered as the sentiments of the people, peace would indeed be unattainable; but arguments against peace, founded on vague expressions in debate, were not worthy serious regard. Their Lordships had often heard in that House expressions as ill-timed, as contemptuous, as virulent against the leaders of France, as any expressions used in the Convention at Paris could possibly be against us. He asked their Lordships, whether they thought so ill of his Majesty's ministers, as to believe that they would refuse to listen to equitable terms of peace, because they had been guilty of a number of idle terms of reproach, or of unmeasured expressions of contempt, in their speeches in Parliament? He did not believe it possible that any set of men could be governed by motives so narrow; and as the conduct of the leaders on both sides had been equal in this respect, he saw no obstacle to negotiation in their mutual reproaches.

The next argument was, how was it possible to make a permanent peace with such people? The word *permanent*, the Noble Duke said, was a new epithet, and one, the force of which he did not perfectly comprehend, as applied to treaties between nations. History would not create in their Lordships' minds any elevated respect for the term; for history was but a memorial, that no peace had been permanent, when it suited either the one or both parties to break it. No solemnity in the engagement, no prospect of duration, however plausible, had ever been realized; and why they should now be so fastidious in trusting to these people, he professed he could not conjecture. He took it, that these people, like all others in the same condition, would act by the rule of interest, and by that

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that only. It was a melancholy recollection, that peace had never been continued by the influence of justice; and all the unjust wars which had taken place in the world, had never made the impression upon rulers and governors of kingdoms to deter them from pursuing the same course. It seldom happened that an unjust war was undertaken without involving its authors in dreadful consequences. The most unjust war that had ever been made against this country had brought consequences on the head of the King of France that made it shocking to recollect; the consequence of his having interfered in the internal concerns of this country afforded a memorable lesson to other Princes and Powers; the French King had gained his end in separating and cutting off a considerable part of our empire; but what had been the dreadful catastrophe to himself and his family? Ministers had repeatedly declared, that they would never treat with the present Government of France; but were they so presuming as to say, that if the King and the Nation were to declare their desire for peace, they would not think themselves bound to acquiesce and treat accordingly?

The Duke earnestly entreated their Lordships' attention to the resolutions which he had read, and to the whole subject as it stood at this impending crisis. He entreated them to dismiss from their minds all passion, which could serve only to blind the judgment, and to obscure truth; to look fairly at the conduct of our allies; at the evident change in the sentiments of a considerable part of Europe; and he was confident that if they would weigh the question in the impartial scales of reason, they would be persuaded, that the course in which we were engaged was neither promising, politic, nor safe; that there was no real foundation for the alarms which we affected to entertain; and that viewing the energy with which the French waged war for their independence, and feeling correspondent vigour in our own breasts, we should be convinced that we could neither conquer France, nor that France could conquer us. He was aware that it had been too much of late the practice to impute to persons, who ventured to stem the torrent of ruling opinions, motives of a sinister and improper kind, and that even Members of the Legislature were not spared from these calumnies, if they presumed, in a conscientious discharge of their duty, to give their sentiments freely upon these topics. It was not the most honourable part of the present system to practise such arts. He hoped that no man would be deterred, on account of them, from pursuing what he felt to be the honest line of duty to his King and Country; and he declared that, for himself, he held them in fove-

reign contempt. The Duke concluded with moving his first resolution.

The Earl of Darnley and Lord Auckland rose together, but the former giving way,

Lord Auckland said, that as one of the resolutions brought forward personally affected him, he felt solicitous to offer what occurred to him respecting it. The Noble Duke had been pleased to consider one of the declarations presented by him, when ambassador to the States General of the United Provinces, as calumniating certain persons at the head of another Government, towards which his Majesty had professed to observe a strict neutrality. It certainly would have been candid to have given him notice that such a charge was meant to be brought forward; he was however satisfied that this attention had been neglected through mere inadvertence. The following are the words on which the Noble Duke is pleased to ground his charge: "It is not quite four years since certain miscreants, assuming the name of Philosophers, have presumed to think themselves capable of establishing a new system of civil society. In order to realize this dream, the offspring of vanity, it became necessary for them to overturn and destroy all established notions of subordination, of morals, and of religion, which had hitherto constituted the security, the happiness, and the consolation of mankind." In order to appreciate these expressions, he must entreat their Lordships to recollect the date of the paper from which the extract is taken. That paper is dated 25th January 1793, several weeks subsequent to the Revolutionary Decree issued by the Convention for the avowed purpose of subverting every Government in Europe; subsequent also to the invasion of the territory of Holland, by the forcible entry of French armed vessels into the Scheldt; four days subsequent to the atrocious murder of the unfortunate King; and six days prior to the declaration of war against England and Holland; in order to which the most perfidious measures had already been adopted by the French Executive Council. Under such circumstances he did not think it necessary at the time to manage his expressions, nor did he now feel himself called upon to justify them. He certainly meant to allude to that description of persons who had principally managed the first Constituent Assembly, to whose vanity, presumption, folly, and infernal wickedness, he had attributed the whole mass of calamities, crimes, and dangers, which now afflict and appal mankind. He particularly meant Messrs. Brissot, Condorcet, Syeyes, Pethion, and their co-operators; some of whom were of a higher rank and description. He did not mean to allude to the men of blood

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who have taken the lead in the present Convention: Those men (with the single exception of Syeyes) have not even the pretension or the affectation of philosophy; they never have shewn an ambition to be considered in any other point of view than as atheists and assassins; the enemies of God and the human race: To that description they had by their deeds supported their title. He had no apology to make either to them or to their predecessors for the sentiments and language which he had so long maintained respecting them.

Having thus disposed of a point on which he had a personal claim to be heard, he wished next to submit a few remarks on the general purport of the Noble Duke's resolutions; and though in strict form the discussion ought to be confined to the first of those resolutions, the usage of debate would allow him to consider the whole together. It was even a point of candour and of fairness to pursue this line, as he intended to conclude with a motion of adjournment.

The resolutions brought forward by the Noble Duke had at least one advantage; they precluded an objection which had lately been often made, and with too much reason; they made it nearly impossible to introduce extraneous matter into debate; they opened the whole circle of politics, foreign and domestic. He trusted, however, that their Lordships would be little disposed to discuss those resolutions *seriatim*; it would be a waste of time. The substance of each resolution had already been ably and fully spoken to by several Noble Lords in preceding debates; he would therefore confine himself to a few general remarks.

And first, as to the internal situation of the kingdom. The Noble Duke had been pleased to say, that if any dangerous fermentations prevail, they have been introduced by the culpable system of Government, and by the innovation of law and of order. And the Noble Duke, adverting to the measures lately adopted by Parliament for the effectual suppression of seditious attempts, had reprehended those measures in terms more remarkable for their force, than for their justice, prudence, or temperance. Lord Auckland added, that if he knew less on this subject, he should be disposed to say more; but having acted in it as a magistrate, he could not use the language of an accuser, and should at any rate feel it objectionable to enter into criminal charges, which are now referred to judicial examination. He would only remark in general, that, whatever was the extent of the danger, it had in great measure ceased from the moment that the conspiracy came under cognizance and public inquiry: If however that conspiracy had been longer neglected, it would have become a corroding and fatal cancer

within the bosom and vitals of the kingdom. And here it seemed material to remark, that the seditious disposition had been confined to a low and bankrupt class, misguided and instigated by a few desperate and wrong-headed individuals. It had also appeared, that in the great bulk of this country, in the people at large, there exist a prevalence of good sense and of loyalty; a strong attachment to the constitution under which we enjoy such blessings; and a just apprehension of the delusive notions which have brought upon France the cruellest despotism ever seen in the worst pages of the history of mankind; a despotism under which one half of that unhappy nation is occupied in the robbery and murder of the other half.

The Noble Duke, and others who acted with him, might possibly consider these statements as exaggerated, and as tending to give ill-founded alarms. He was not disposed to attribute their opinions to bad motives; he could not believe them to be other than sincere; but their opinions differed so glaringly and so strikingly from those which he felt, that either he or they must be under the impression of a moral and intellectual blindness. If that blindness affected him, and those who thought as he did, it carried with it at least one consolation; it might give superfluous anxieties, but its whole tendency was to do good, and to preserve mankind from evil. On the contrary, if those who laugh at the present alarms, should appear in the result to be shutting their eyes against great and real danger, he thanked God most heartily that they were few in number either in or out of Parliament. Such a blindness, if more general, might prove fatal to the whole system of civil society, and to every consideration for which life is worth preserving.

It remained to say a few words on our external situation. The Noble Duke had attempted to shew in some detail, that the objects of the war had in the course of it been contradictory, and that it was become impossible to attain them. He fully agreed with the Noble Duke as to the difficulties and risks of the war; he never had seen it otherwise than with the most serious uneasiness. It might be in the recollection of many that he had expressed himself strongly to this effect on the first day of the session. Nothing had since happened to lessen his uneasiness; on the contrary, it was gaining strength. When he saw in the people of France a desperate abandonment of all principles of humanity, morality, and religion; when they were known to overleap every consideration which must restrain the exertions of other nations as long as there remains on the earth any regard for life or for property, he could not but feel that in this point of view the contest is unequal,

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unequal. We certainly have a formidable enemy; but we have no alternative; we are in the predicament of a rower against a torrent,

“ Si brachia forte remisit ;

“ Atque illum in præceps prono rapit alveus amni.”

On the other hand, he was far from feeling despondence. It was not to be supposed that so unnatural and so monstrous a paroxysm as that of France could be permanent. His confidence in the protection of Providence would not allow him to believe that the Supreme Being had determined the subversion of all states, and the general destruction of mankind by each other's hands. He hoped therefore, that before the next session should arrive, the prospects of Europe would be far less gloomy than he confessed them to be at present, and that we should be drawing towards a safe close of a just and unavoidable war. He concluded by a motion of adjournment.

Lord Darnley said, he had given way with pleasure to the Noble Lord who had just sat down, as the opportunities of that Noble Lord enabled him to give a better and more explicit reply to certain points touched on by the Noble Duke, than he could pretend to do; but he would trespass a few moments upon their Lordships' time, as he was eager to speak his sentiments on the situation of affairs at that period of the session, and to state the reasons why he could not agree with any of the resolutions proposed by the Noble Duke. All the arguments which had been used in favour of peace were such as had been often urged and often refuted before; nothing new had been said, to prove that this country could with safety or honour make a peace with the present Government of France. With regard to what had fallen from the Noble Duke respecting the internal state of our affairs, he must also differ from it; because it appeared to him, that every step taken by ministers was called for by the necessity of the times, and that they would have betrayed their trust, if they had neglected to follow those measures. He declared, that, although he had been silent upon the different days this subject had been debated in that House, he was so only because others had presented themselves whom he thought better informed upon the subject; but he would take the liberty of stating, that his Majesty's ministers had his thanks for the spirited manner in which they had proceeded. He thought the war had been fairly and justly entered into on our parts; nor did he think, although there might be some little difference in wording the different papers alluded to by the Noble Duke, there was the smallest variation in principle, or contradiction in fact, in any thing that

that had been issued by the different combined powers. With respect to the subsidizing the King of Prussia, the fair question was not, whether he could or could not go on without that subsidy, but whether we required his assistance; and, being under that necessity, whether we could have obtained it upon better terms? He considered that French principles were making great and rapid strides in this country, and therefore he thought that every lover of good order was bound to approve of the manner in which Administration had proceeded to check them: Had not such measures been timely taken, we might have experienced the same scenes of anarchy and confusion as had taken place in France. A great majority in Parliament had testified their approbation of them, and he was sure as great a majority was to be found among the people at large. It was true, a few persons in that House took occasion to cavil at every proceeding that went to the attainment of the grand object. We had every thing at stake, and therefore he could not approve throwing any kind of impediment in the way of the Executive Power, who were acting so wisely and so prudently; and, on that account, he should most certainly give his negative to the resolutions stated by the Noble Duke.

Earl Fitzwilliam began his speech with some strong expressions of the reluctance that he felt on finding himself bound to oppose the Noble Duke, for whom he entertained the highest regard; but on the present occasion he must totally differ from him. Peace was most undoubtedly a desirable object; but, in endeavouring to attain it, we ought not to sacrifice or endanger the security of the country. He had heard many arguments upon this subject; but he had never heard any which proved to him the possibility of making peace with safety. He said that it was not a sufficient ground, because the matter of most of the resolutions of the Noble Duke was to be found on their table, that therefore they should adopt the conclusions he had drawn from them. The precise question to be inquired into was, Whether it was consistent with the wisdom of the Country, to come at this time to a specific declaration of our object in the war or not? In his opinion it was not called for by the present circumstances of Europe. The object was sufficiently apparent. The Noble Duke had made it a doubtful question who were the authors of the war: It surely was not doubtful whether the French had made the public profession of doctrines that were inimical to this and every civilized country. Had they not also made direct war on our allies? How could it then be said, that they had not been the provokers as well as the declarers of the war? It should be recollected, that the foundation for the present

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present hostilities was laid by France in the famous declaration, that they were ready to proceed to war for the subversion of every existing government. Therefore before peace could be had, France must annul and undo that declaration. At present he insisted, they were the enemies of mankind, and the constitution of every country. We had borne with them too long. Could we offer terms of peace to France while that declaration remained unrepealed? Such a proposal could neither be made with any regard to our honour or to our safety. If he were inclined at all to blame ministers, he should arraign them only for being tardy in their proceedings. But they had his cordial and entire approbation for having at length roused from their lethargy, and taken steps to secure us against the horrors which had desolated France.

It had been urged, that we had no right to interfere in the conduct of France. He denied the position. It became a great and magnanimous people to become the defenders of mankind. It had been the glorious province of England at all times. Our great King William had, in the same manner, risen up the defender of mankind against the ambition of Louis XIV. and had confederated with the other powers to stem the torrent that then threatened to overwhelm the world. We had now the same object; France sought to over-run Europe, though by other means; and whether it was to be by arms, or by the more pernicious force of a false logic, he trusted that this country would never be so supine as either to become a vile province of France, or to desert the cause of mankind in general. Had not France attacked the independence of those states whose weakness presented them to her ambition as an easy prey? What was the state of Savoy, and at that instant of Piedmont? Surely in such a crisis England should pursue its ancient and dignified system of protecting the weak, and of preserving the order and safety of mankind. Yet we had been arraigned for assisting the King of Sardinia to defend himself. Such had been the policy of England in its most glorious æras. Such had been our system during the Whig Administration of Queen Anne, and it had brought distinction and honour on England. When the Tory Administration, that followed, changed that system, deserted our allies, and abandoned the cause of the weak, what were not the calamities and the disgrace that ensued? He therefore maintained that the interference of England was proper and dignified. We had a right to interfere in the internal affairs of France, until those internal affairs should be so regulated as to give security to mankind. He declared, that he should withdraw his feeble support from ministers if they were to abandon that principle.

principle. Nor had he any hesitation in acknowledging, that he was an advocate for the re-establishment of Monarchy in France, because that was an intelligible means of restoring order. He did not mean to be understood that he would not make peace with France while she retained her republican form of government, though he confessed he should rather see a monarchy in that country; but if there was a regular government, that could be treated with, once established, he for one would be willing to make peace with it. He had no objection to republics; on the contrary, he admired the simple and beautiful superstructure of America. The Americans had exerted the purest wisdom in the formation of their government. All he wanted was security and stability. He wished to have something solid to repose upon for the peace and happiness of mankind. By the restoration of monarchy every thing would fall again into its place. At present France was a republic only in name; the conduct of her rulers, and the madness of her principles, rather partook of the most despotic of governments in the worst of times. Did ever America suggest wild and extravagant principles? When Congress threw off the sovereignty of this country, and declared the States independent, did they resolve any thing that was to disturb the peace of other countries? Did they declare themselves the enemies of all other forms of government? Did they make any declarations in favour of what was called the rights of man? No; the first thing they did was to frame good and proper laws for their own internal government, and never interfered by word or deed with that of any other. The French, on the other hand, he maintained to have no law; and although they might pretend to be republicans, he affirmed that they were slaves to the most rigid despotism upon earth; for although their monarch (Robespierre) had renounced the base trappings, he retained the solid support of *royalty*, for he was constantly attended by a body guard.

He denied that the King of Prussia and the Emperor had been the authors of the war. On the contrary, Brissot himself had owned that they had made the rupture with the express design of overturning the monarchy of France, and they had too successfully gained their end. He was firmly persuaded that it was necessary to precipitate the Bill for the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act through the House; the country approved of the hasty manner in which it had passed, as absolutely necessary to crush the evil, which it is intended to destroy. The Noble Duke had rather unfortunately said, that men might be guilty of expressions against the Government in the heat of passion, from the burdens of the increased taxes arising

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arising from the present war. He was unfortunate in the instance, because as yet he did not believe a single shilling of new taxes had been paid by any individual. Sure he was, that the public feeling was in favour of the war. That there had existed, and perhaps did yet exist, in this country, a conspiracy against its government, was a fact, in his opinion, beyond contradiction; but he was happy to say, he believed the evil was not extensive. He had an opportunity, only a few days since, of observing the general opinion of the people in a very important part of the county of York, and he could assure the House that the West Riding of Yorkshire was unanimous in its sentiments on the occasion; satisfied with the measures of Government in regard to the war, and grateful for the steps that had been taken to preserve us from the contamination of Jacobin doctrines. The rigorous measures of suspending the *Habeas Corpus* and other Acts, were in unison with the opinion of the country. They saw that this course was consistent with the true policy of the nation, which depended for its trade and commerce not only on its own peace, but on the tranquillity and safety of other nations. Our trade could only be beneficial through the security and opulence of the nations with whom it was carried on. We were not to judge of England as it appeared on the map, a little, miserable, accidental speck, but as a most magnificent empire, contributing to the wants, and securing the prosperity of all the nations of the earth. He concluded with saying, that he should cheerfully give his vote for the motion of adjournment.

The Duke of Grafton began his speech with taking notice of that part of the Duke of Bedford's speech, which related to the calumnies industriously circulated against the members of Opposition; he lamented that insinuations should be thrown out in that House against the propriety of the conduct of any man; but he trusted that such insinuations would not deter one individual from pursuing what he thought to be his duty; let whatever would be said, in these times of party spirit, it was some satisfaction to recollect, that the fair page of history would do justice to the few, and hand their conduct down with honour to posterity, and record the names of those, however small their number, who had honesty enough to endeavour to check the torrent which threatened to deprive us of our liberties, and overturn the constitution. Our successors, it was true, might have to regret the consequences of this system; but it would be some consolation to find, that those blessings our fathers had struggled to obtain for us, had not been lost at this time, without a struggle to hand them down

to our children. He congratulated his country on the great and important acquisition they had gained in the talents of the Noble Duke who had opened the business of that day. The weight of his abilities, and the importance of his character, would carry the present discussion home to the consideration of every part of the country, whatever might be its fate in that House. It could not fail to produce the beneficial consequence which alone was wanting to our salvation, namely, that the people should take courage, manfully and seriously to examine the dreadful and momentous object in which they were engaged; and he was sure that the perspicuous and forcible manner in which the Noble Duke had treated the subject, would bring conviction to the understanding of every impartial man.

The Noble Earl who had just sat down, had gone into a great variety of matter, to prove that the propositions of the Noble Duke were objectionable, without scarcely touching upon any one point those propositions referred to. He had, indeed, given them one piece of information, and no unimportant one, since the session must be supposed to be near a conclusion, and their Lordships would have to retire into the country, with the consolation, that our object was not only to overturn the system of government at present existing in France, but that we were not to stop short of the establishment of monarchy. It was not his intention, his Grace said, because he considered it to be superfluous, to retrace the variety of foreign matter introduced by the Noble Lord who spoke second in this debate. He would however, before he entered further on this subject, give his strongest negative to the proposition of our continuing the war until the restoration of monarchy in France, as he considered that every nation had a right to establish the form of government best suited to the majority of the people, and that the majority had an undoubted right to chuse its own peculiar form of government.

Lord Fitzwilliam explained, that he had only meant, that, in his opinion, a disposition in them to restore monarchy would be a proof of their returning to order.

The Duke of Grafton declared, that he was happy to have heard this explanation, because it gave him hopes that this strange crusade was not to be carried to that wild extent he had feared was intended. He was then, and had always been, of opinion, that the war was unnecessarily entered into on our parts. He did not mean to deny, that he believed some aggression had been given by France to its neighbours, though, possibly, not without sufficient provocation. Was it therefore necessary that we should rush into a war? Would it have been

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any way derogatory to our character to have stood forward as a mediator? Would either Austria or France, at that time, have refused to take us as an arbitrator? Having thus run heedlessly into the war, it was not so much a matter of surprise that the principals had become our subsidiaries. Prussia had been defended upon the ground of incapacity, but was that the fact? Would any Noble Lord undertake to say, that it would not hereafter turn out, that the King of Prussia rather wished to save expences in this grand combination, to carry on a war in another quarter, against a brave and loyal people, struggling for justice, their rights, and liberties? To his tardiness, however, and withholding his forces, were certainly to be attributed the advantages the French had obtained in West Flanders. Another of our allies, the Emperor, should we be obliged to go into another campaign, there was some reason to fear, would not be enabled to make the most vigorous exertions. A third, the Empress of Russia, had apparently but very little inclination to the business, and much assistance was not to be expected from her. Spain seemed totally incapable of defending herself on that side; for, if he was rightly informed, the French were constantly obtaining advantages; and it appeared his Sardinian Majesty was nearly ruined. He did not delight in drawing melancholy pictures; but, in some cases, it might not be improper to state facts, by way of inducing ministers to abandon a favourite, though injurious, plan of pursuit. How long did they suppose the good sense of the people of this country would suffer them to go on in the present manner? He could remember more than one instance, where that good sense had been exerted with great advantage to the country, and he hoped to see it so exerted again; it had been the means of putting an end to the American contest, during which something like the present insinuations were used against those who opposed its continuance. This same good sense had also again interfered, and saved us from a Russian war; for so partial were the present ministers to preserve what they supposed to be the balance of power in Europe, that they would not have hesitated to have encountered all the expences of a war, to determine whether Russia or the Porte should be in possession of Oczakow. Four years ago only, the Duke said, Government was acting the Draw-cansir in defence of the liberties of Europe; and now was seen prize-fighting for the re-establishment of despotism in France; in pursuance of which plan, every thing that was adverse to France was undertaken with alacrity, and every thing in her favour rejected. He particularly adverted to the proposal which had been made by France to the King of England,

land, to undertake the office of mediator between them and Austria; with which requisition had Administration advised the King to comply, that country, and all Europe, might this day have been in a happy state of peace, and this country have avoided all the misfortunes attendant upon the war.

A Noble Earl had said, no complaint ought as yet to be made of the expences, because none were paid; but was it not matter of complaint to see the burden that must inevitably follow, and to behold the whole property of the country laid out, as it were, upon mortgage? The circulation of French principles seemed to be a full answer for every extraordinary proceeding, and with that as an excuse, every part of our constitution was to be invaded with impunity. This had been so ably described to their Lordships by the Noble Duke who had come forward on this occasion, that it was unnecessary for him to dwell upon it; to the abilities he displayed on this occasion he should say little, because personal praise was not often entitled to be considered as sincere, and was rather to be regarded as an offering of flattery than a tribute of justice. Thus much, however, he would assert, that it must be a pleasing circumstance to his countrymen to find appear in the political lists, as a champion for their liberties, the lineal descendant of him who cheerfully yielded his life in defence of their constitution.

Having urged at considerable length the necessity of our concluding a peace with France, his Grace took notice of the alarm at present artfully raised, in order to give an opportunity of carrying measures the most unconstitutional, and which he feared ministers would repent. He did not suppose the propositions urged by the Noble Duke would be carried that night; but as in all probability it was the last motion of the kind that would come forward that session, he earnestly entreated their Lordships to consider the matter well before the next meeting of Parliament; and if they could judge unbiassed and impartially, he was certain they would, ere that period, confess the necessity of them; should they not so apply some part of their leisure, he was convinced that this good at least must result—the people at large, with a veneration for the high character who had given rise to the debate, would themselves well weigh the situation in which their country stood, and by petition, or other means, so instruct their representatives, that peace would be the unanimous cry; and that as long as the sacred word Liberty should be taught the infant babe, it would be learnt to lisp, at the same time, the respectable name of William Lord Russell.

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The Earl of Mansfield highly complimented the Noble Duke (Bedford) on the great ability and eloquence with which he had brought forward his motion, but said, that when he heard measures, which had so repeatedly received the sanction of that House, accused of entailing mischief on posterity, it was impossible for him to sit silent. He declared, he was not in the least desirous to shrink from his share of the imputation, but was ready to take his part of the censure that might arise from those measures, and continue to give them his strongest support. He begged leave to call to the recollection of the House a phrase which some of their Lordships had that day heard in another place (Westminster Hall) of a certain Roman lawyer, who, from his frequent repetition of a particular expression, was nick-named *Cui Bono*. He would take leave to make use of this idea, and ask the Noble Duke (Bedford) what purpose could be answered by Parliament adopting such resolutions as he had proposed? Had their Lordships, he demanded, forgotten the principles of the British constitution, and the spirit that distinguished British councils, so far as to say, they were ready to prostrate themselves at the feet of the French Convention, and ask forgiveness for the measures they had so often and so solemnly approved? He besought their Lordships to recollect, that there was a great difference between the effect of solemn resolutions of Parliament and what fell from individual Peers in occasional debate: The latter might possibly make some impression on foreign powers, but a very slight impression compared with that of the other. He desired their Lordships to consider, whether they would, without the consent of our allies, send and offer to treat with the enemy? And if they were prepared to go that length, who would consent to be the ambassador? Would the Noble Duke (Grafton) undertake the office? The Noble Duke in the course of his speech had said, that this country was mortgaged; which was as much as to say, that it was in no case whatsoever, or however urgent the necessity, able to maintain a war. He regretted that such language and such reasoning should come from a Noble Lord who had filled the highest offices of the state. He would not trifle so far with the time of the House as to attempt proving a point so plain as the reverse of the Noble Duke's suggestion, because, if his Grace's proposition were well founded, Great Britain held her existence on the precarious tenure of the will of any other nation who chose to attack her. It had been said by the Noble Duke who opened the debate, that it was much to be feared we were prosecuting measures in this country that tended to sour and irritate the dispositions of the people. He was of a contrary opinion; because,

because, he believed, the general sentiment of the nation was an utter abhorrence of the daily consequences of the dire system of misrule that now oppressed France; and he trusted that the character of Englishmen would never be stained by the atrocious cruelties that had been exercised in that unhappy country.

With regard to the assertion, that ministers had forced France into a war, he would answer it from a publication that he held in his hand, which never yet had been alluded to in any argument in that House, but which could not but have great and decisive weight, when put into the scale, even against the eloquence of the Noble Duke. This paper was the letter of the Abbé Syeyes to Monsieur Neckar, in which he made use of these words: "*I shall regret all my life that France provoked war, and set Europe against her.*" After such a declaration from such authority, he owned he was somewhat surprised to find Noble Lords still continue to throw the odium of having instigated the French to war on us, and to accuse Great Britain of being the aggressor. On this point he thought it almost superfluous to remind the House, that it had been notoriously a matter of contest in the Convention, which of the parties in that assembly occasioned the war; the Girondists accused the Jacobins, and the Jacobins the Girondists, of being the authors of the war: All, however, agreed in the great substantial point, that it was not any foreign power that provoked or began it.

With respect to the laying an embargo on corn, being a part of the supposed provocation, to refresh their Lordships' memory, he would remind them that Brissot had given orders to prepare a fleet with all possible dispatch, and to purchase up all the provisions that could be got for that purpose. Had not ministers thereupon taken measures to prevent as much as possible those purchases being effected, they would have been guilty of a criminal dereliction of their duty; and those very Peers, who now made that act the subject of animadversion, would probably have been the first to stand forth in that case, and accuse ministers (with justice too) of having betrayed the interest of their country.

If he had been immediately connected with Administration, the Earl said, he should have advised every step that had been taken. The war with France was, as it had been repeatedly declared in that House, both just and necessary; nor, with the prospect of any security to this country, could it possibly have been avoided. Having been engaged in it, all necessary expences ought to be cheerfully and liberally allowed for carrying it on with vigour, until some means were procured of obtaining

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He utterly denied that the King of Prussia had abandoned the cause, or deserted the confederacy. That monarch had openly declared, that he was unable to maintain so very large a force as was expected from him in the field; but was ready to fulfil all his engagements by treaty, by not only furnishing his contingent as a member of the Germanic body, but also the quota reserved by his treaties with Holland and Great Britain. This was by no means a desertion of the alliance. A new principle, his Lordship observed, had that night been broached; the war was clearly a defensive war; in answer to which it was said, that if it were a defensive war, Great Britain had no right to carry on offensive hostilities against the enemy, or interfere with the internal concerns of the French. He declared, it was the first time he had heard it laid down as a doctrine, that because a war was defensive, the assailant should not be attacked in turn. In nothing that he had known or could find in history, was such a doctrine to be found; indeed it was absurd in the extreme to contend, that, because we were to act on the defensive, we were not to weaken by any means in our power the strength of our enemy. As well might it be said that a man, with his back against a wall, defending himself from the attacks of an antagonist, ought only to parry, and never to push against that antagonist, even though a favourable opportunity offered; for a man attacked to manage his defence so idly, would inevitably end in his being subdued, and contradict every principle of the art of defence. Just so it would be found with any two powers, even supposing them to be equally matched; if that power who acted upon the defensive system did not endeavour to conquer the enemy by every means in its power, it must undoubtedly at length be itself conquered. In his humble judgment, his Lordship said, the best mode of defence was to carry the war into the enemy's country, as far as from the nature and circumstances of the war it should be practicable. The care of the French, that was so officiously affected in that and the other House of Parliament, the Earl remarked, was somewhat singular. In former wars with France, no such anxiety in their behalf had been manifested, or even thought seemly or becoming. He was at a loss to what cause to ascribe it; but whatever motive produced so strange a phenomenon in the minds of Englishmen, whatever might be the origin of those feelings, he thanked God their influence was not very extensive; and he was sure, that as the mass of the people of this country

country unequivocally approved of the conduct of ministers, so the measures adopted by them, on the subject in question, would be handed down to posterity with applause and honour.

The Duke of Grafton desired to explain. He persisted in his assertion, that the finances of this country were in danger, and that any man acquainted with the subject must perceive and lament that the resources of Great Britain were proceeding towards exhaustion with an alarming rapidity. He said, that, at the time when he left the situation which he had held in Administration, the public debt of the country amounted to *one hundred and thirty-two millions*. That enormous debt had been doubled in about twelve years. This circumstance, had there been no other, warranted all that he had said about the resources of the country, and the state to which they had been reduced by wars, and which, he might add, had made wars seem necessary. The Duke declared, he was one of those who had always disapproved of the funding system: His opinion was, that we ought to raise the whole amount of our supplies within the year, and not assume a right which did not, by any means, belong to us, *viz.* to indulge speculations to gratify our own passions and prejudices, and mortgage over and over again for posterity. With a large family at his back, he would have no objection to contribute to the expences of the state in a manner proportionable to the property he possessed; in public as in private life, he thought that man never could be reckoned a good character, who, for his own temporary purposes, indulged in extravagance, merely because he could, to avoid the immediate inconvenience, and would be beyond the reach of consequences, transfer them to his successor, whom he knew it must ruin.

Lord Albemarle began a short speech with adverting to what had fallen from a Noble Lord in the early part of the debate, *viz.* that it was necessary for every one to avow his sentiments; coinciding, as he did, with that Noble Lord in his opinion, he said, he could not give a silent vote upon the Resolutions. He entreated the House to consider the magnitude of the subject before them, and reflect, that the bloody contest carrying on at this time on the continent, could not but be viewed by individuals with the utmost detestation. It was easy to mention the loss of twelve thousand men in one engagement with somewhat like apathy and indifference; but the horror that must follow upon reflection, could better be conceived than described. It was not his intention to bring those gloomy objects before their Lordships under the artifice of high colouring; the fact of itself was sufficiently pregnant with unpleasant sensations; the impression it had made on
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his mind could not be easily eradicated; and other Noble Lords, doubtless, felt as deeply as he did, the lamentable effect of war, which this single instance manifested most seriously. He declared solemnly, that he saw no cause or reason for alarm in this country, nor any thing that could warrant the late unconstitutional proceedings; he firmly believed a peace, a permanent peace, might be made with the French; that the present war was unnecessary and unjust; and that the objects of it had ceased to exist, the nature of it having been totally changed. The Earl said, he was convinced that it was impossible for us to obtain final success, and he would always oppose a war which was likely to tarnish the honour of the British name, where success was scarcely possible, and failure certain. He concluded with saying, that the arguments already adduced by his Noble Friends were sufficiently strong to induce him to give his support to the Resolutions.

The Earl of Abingdon addressed the House in these terms: "My Lords; a new species of oratory having been lately introduced into this House from one savage people, in order, I presume to accustom our ears to another dialect intended soon for our adoption from another savage nation, I will, my Lords, with your Lordships' leave, in delivering the little I have to say on this motion, give the House a small specimen of each;

"*Children*—I was in hopes, Children, that the dangers to which, Children, you seem, Children, so much exposed, Children, from this savage war, Children, would have made ye, Children, lay aside, Children, these *childish* motions, Children.

"The other dialect is this:

"*Citizens*—It being my fixed determination, Citizens, as in the National Convention, Citizens, never to go, Citizens, to the *Mountain* side of this House, Citizens, it is with peculiar pleasure, Citizens, I see, Citizens, the *Mountain* side of the House, Citizens, is coming over to me, Citizens; the consequence of which, Citizens, is, that this *Mountain*, Citizens, will at length, Citizens, produce a mouse, Citizens.

"And now one word on the motion itself. The best road to *peace*, my Lords, is *war*, and that in the manner we are taught to worship our *Creator*, namely, by carrying it on with all our souls, with all our minds, with all our hearts, and with all our strength; and so, my Lords, I am against this motion."

The Earl of Lauderdale began with assuring their Lordships, that he had no intention to detain the House but for a very short time. He considered it to be his duty to offer the tribute

of praise and thanks to his Noble Friend for the motion which he had brought forward, and much more particularly for the able, manly, and eloquent manner in which he had supported it, by arguments, which, from the turn the debate had taken, appeared not easy to be refuted, as no satisfactory answer had yet been given to any one of them. To compliment the Noble Duke in adequate terms, however merited, and however sincerely they might come from him, was a task that, were he equal to it, the delicacy arising from the Noble Duke's being present, must prevent him from attempting. There was one point, nevertheless, which he could not omit to mention, and that was, when a person of the Noble Duke's high rank thought it his duty to come forward with resolutions, so well adapted to the interests of his country, that single fact must give the lie direct to all those insinuations he was sorry to hear within, and all those misrepresentations without doors, by which an attempt was made to hold out to the people, that all those who were not friends to the war, and the destructive system pursued by the present ministers, were enemies to the country, and men who wished to subvert the constitution, and overturn all order in the government, religion, and property of Great Britain. Surely, such a gross calumny could not be cast on his Noble Friend, or the other Noble Duke who had spoken in support of the motion, without incurring the charge of lunacy on the part of those who should attempt so absurd a thing, as to hint even that the Noble Duke, or any of his friends, were enemies to that constitution, which provided such ample security for private property. Fortunately, neither insinuation nor persecution could attach to the illustrious character who that evening brought forward his propositions. He was as elevated in rank as in idea; and equally superior to the petty attacks of malevolence, or the mean allurements of ambition. Descended from one of the noblest families in this country, in fortune unequalled, of exalted connexions, great in the qualities of nature, and still greater by the improvement of science and of art, he could not be accused of endeavouring to subvert the constitution, or of having conspired with the enemies of his country. From him, therefore, resolutions of this complexion came with a peculiar grace, since, in the time of insurrection, he had so much to lose; and, in the moment of alarm, so much to endeavour to preserve. It had been often said, that Opposition had brought forward nothing new.

A Noble Lord that day, in his comments on the speech of his Noble Friend, observed, that he had urged nothing new. New! What novelty did the Noble Lord expect? What novelty

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rely would he desire? Did not every Gazette gratify his eager curiosity? Did not every Gazette, and every private letter from Flanders, bring new accounts of expenditure, and new accounts of bloodshed? These were arguments, and strong ones, against the war. Every day, new proofs of the increase of our expenditure, and new returns of the loss of the lives of our soldiers, were received. New and unexampled devastation of life and property was the offspring of every hour, and the subject of each distinct communication of intelligence from the continent. It was, therefore, the duty of every honest man to watch the rising events of the campaign, and to propose, without intermission, some remedy for the evils, that increased with each revolving day. In his mind, every man that was killed, and every pound that the war cost, was a new, an additional, and a weighty reason for putting a stop to it.

With regard to the possibility of making peace, and the terms upon which it might be negotiated, he saw none of those difficulties which some people were afraid of; and such difficulties as there were, he believed were created by those who were ready to repeat the common-place question of ministers, Who can you treat with? A question which precluded a particular description of men from being in any situation to make peace with, and of course set up an insurmountable bar to the conclusion of the war.

The Earl replied to what Lord Auckland had said about the wording of his memorial, as not being intended for the ruling party in France, but for a few individuals; and contended, that almost the whole of the conduct of ministers during the war had been a violation of the law of nations. He reprobated the idea that this country should never make peace till the ancient monarchy of France was re-established, and every man put in his former place; an idea, in his contemplation, equally absurd and impracticable. With regard to the opinion of a majority of the people in that country being for monarchy, he had been in it, and, from the best information he could obtain there, or had been able to learn since, he never had heard that it was the restoration of monarchy which was their wish, however much they might be displeased with the ruling party at the time.

Much had been said, his Lordship observed, about the unwarrantable discontents of this country, which now notoriously existed, and were daily growing worse; no wonder it was so; when oppressions multiplied, complaints would abound; and if no remedies were applied to such ulcers, the blame lay at the door of those that had the power of healing,

and would not suffer the obvious remedy to be applied, and not at the door of those who smarted under the disease.

If the people complained, they ought, in some measure, to be forgiven for doing so; and that system of prosecution, whereby spies and informers were employed to provoke and irritate men's minds, that, when they had excited an involuntary expression, in the heat of passion, they might ground an accusation, was, in his conception, most scandalous and disgraceful to Government. Many industrious manufacturers, by no means plotting against the state or constitution, might, in a heavy moment of calamity, give vent to some unhappy exclamation, which should be suffered to die and be forgotten. How many families were reduced, by the increasing poor-rates, the accumulation of taxes, and the decay of trade, to the most abject state of penury and wretchedness? And, surely, if with a heart-bursting sigh they poured out a sentence of complaint; if, when not only in want of subsistence, they were deprived of the very tools in their trade, for gaining it, if they should venture to murmur, the cause of their grief should be considered, and the matter be buried in oblivion.

His Lordship took a view of the armies abroad, and branded the returns in the Gazette, after every action, with duplicity and delusion; which, he said, were obviously used to conceal the true statement from the people, and deceive them with mistaken notions of success. To support this assertion, he stated what he considered as an unwarrantable instance of the fact, viz. the wilful suppression of the names of officers; however brave and active, by any means related to or connected with persons of opposite opinions to the minister in this country. He named one in particular, Colonel Fox, an officer who had signalised himself in repeated engagements; and especially on a late occasion, when his services were highly meritorious; though his name was not mentioned in the London Gazette, the foreign papers had done him justice.

The other artifices the Earl mentioned were the delay in the account of a defeat, and the acceleration in the report of a victory; the immediate return of the killed and wounded of the enemy whenever unsuccessful, and *vice versa*, the sum total of the enemy, with the loss of the English only, whereby the ignorant, the credulous, and superficial, were induced to believe, that the British forces were so transcendent to the French. He read the returns of the 22d, by way of illustration, and contrasted it with that of the *Père Duchesne*, and the Bulletin of the Emperor. The Bulletin states the loss of the French at twelve thousand and the allies at six thousand.

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In our naval, as in our land forces, the same artifices were open to detection, as might be proved by reference to various maritime events. With regard to the argument of a Noble Earl, that not a shilling of the new taxes had yet come out of the pockets of the people, he was aware that the money for the subsidies would be paid out of the sums raised at a former period for the preservation of trade; but still there were other sums to be accounted for, and other losses, which no Noble Lord could deny must ultimately be sustained by the people. The loan for the Emperor also, and the four hundred thousand pounds, stipulated in the treaty with the King of Prussia to be paid by the Dutch, as the quota of the Prussian subsidy, furnished his Lordship with a ground for a variety of remarks.

The Earl contended, that it was highly impolitic for us, as a commercial nation, to continue the war with France, since, at the commencement of it, we had so long disclaimed all interference, and apparently approved so much of their proceedings, that many persons had, in consequence, laid out money to a large amount, upon the church lands and demesnes of the Noblesse, which money had become forfeited, in consequence of subsequent decrees of the Convention, and could never be recovered. He described the deplorable situation of our allies in general, the interruption of manufactures and commerce, and the rise of insurrection at home. Even admitting the resources of the country to be in the most favourable state, it certainly required prudence to manage them. He dwelt upon the reliance which ministers had always entertained, that, by well-disciplined troops, they were to conquer France. Every man, who knew what had happened, must give up that idea, and acknowledge, as all military men did, that two campaigns of hard fighting was the best lesson for making good soldiers. Upon what grounds did ministers found their hopes of success? Were they more likely to obtain their object this year than the last, when a very large body of insurgents in La Vendée were in the same tune with the ministers in this country? Where were those Royalists at present? The recent accounts from France, conveyed by every newspaper in Europe, assured us that they were suppressed, vanquished, and destroyed. Notwithstanding that the French nation was stated by some Noble Lords to be hostile to the ruling powers, and that their soldiers were ready to yield their arms to the allies, fatal experience had but too well proved, that they would never yield the palm of victory, unless on such occasions when they are out-generaled or overpowered by numbers. Their present condition was worthy of remark: The whole nation has been trained to arms for the last three years. Their veterans,

rans, and those of the allies. Let it be supposed, had perished in the war, or died of age or disease; when the raw recruits of this country (gallant and valorous as Britons ever prove themselves) were brought to oppose them, it was more than can be expected, that their native courage should prevail over discipline and experience. It was much to be feared, that the alienation of the church lands, and the estates of the emigrants, had given to the mass of the people an interest in the support of the present rulers, that could not be easily shaken by foreign armies. If, however, their whole system could be overturned, and we were to succeed in placing a monarch upon the throne, we ought to calculate the expence of maintaining him in his situation, contrary to the wishes of the majority of the nation.

His Lordship took a general review of the American war, our conduct in the pursuit of which, in a great measure, he maintained, coincided with our present: The same language had been used to their leaders, which was applied to those in power in France: We had offered a reward for the head of Washington, calling him traitor, &c. but, in the end, we were obliged to treat with that able and distinguished General: He doubted much if we should not be under a similar necessity again: At all events, it would be politic not to continue the war, as the subsidies we had entered into were as much as we could well bear. Last year we found it necessary to aid the commerce of this country with Exchequer Bills to the amount of five millions: This sum was likely to be drawn from the country by the loan of the Emperor. The subsidy to the King of Prussia would likewise take two millions from England, not to mention the subsidy to the Prince of Hesse Cassel, the Elector of Hanover, and the King of Sardinia; and he much doubted, that, instead of a loan the next year to the Emperor, a subsidy would be demanded. Thus were we likely to bear the burden of the war, the object of which has been changed since last year, and might be again changed before the next.

Peace, for reasons which had been repeatedly mentioned in that House, was the most desirable thing for the nation at large, and therefore deserved the concurrence of every Noble Lord who wished well to the prosperity of his country.

The Noble Earl (Fitzwilliam), his Lordship observed, had said, that the monarchy of France must be established before peace could be restored. It was the first time he had heard that language from his Lordship, and he sincerely trusted it would be the last.

He contemplated the subscriptions in this country, which he compared to the forced loan adopted by Barrere and the Committee of Safety. In every point of view, he must support

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port the propositions, which, for the happiness of the country, he hoped would be carried.

Lord Lauderdale concluded by declaring, that it was some consolation to him, amidst these proceedings, that his name would go down to posterity on the Journals of that House with the Noble Duke who proposed these Resolutions.

Earl Fitzwilliam, in explanation, said, that the Earl of Lauderdale had misconceived his argument, when he had stated it as going to the re-establishment of the ancient despotism of France, which had not been the drift of it, nor in the smallest degree within his meaning. His Lordship said, that he had stated, and he was still of opinion, that a government of the monarchic form was the most likely, indeed the only, one, that could be looked up to as permanently founded, and from which could be rationally expected a remedy for the evil that afflicted France, and with a communication of which other nations were threatened. At the same time his Lordship did not pretend to define what were the modifications to which kingly government should be subject in France; that, he said, ought to be left to the adjustment of the French themselves.

Lord Hawkebury (who had risen once before to speak, but gave way to another Noble Lord) said, that if he was to answer all that had been advanced by Noble Lords in the course of the debate, he should be obliged to answer every thing that had been said on that side for the whole session; for every thing that had been said on every motion which had been made in that House for the whole session, had been collected into their arguments of that night: He would not, therefore, waste their time with such a dull repetition, but proceed to those few points which had any pretensions to novelty. He professed that he entertained a high respect for the Noble Duke who brought forward the Resolutions, for his rank, for his property, and for his talents; but he had heard from a Noble Peer (*Fitzwilliam*) a species of eloquence of the best and noblest kind, the voice of a large, populous, trading, and manufacturing county. He would set the authority of the one against the authority of the other, and had little doubt which would preponderate in the minds of the House. He reminded their Lordships, that there was no step which they should be so cautious in taking as that of interfering with the royal prerogative, more particularly in any thing respecting peace or war. The enemy might infer from it, that the legislative part of the Government was adverse to the executive, and make peace doubly difficult of attainment. It would blow the sparks of dissention, too, among our allies; and from that moment the enemy would rear his crest with more formidable bold-

boldness. His Lordship said, that this country was the soul of the confederacy against France. If our allies should see that a branch of the Government was averse to the continuance of this object, they would become dispirited, mutual distrust would ensue, and the consequence would be fatal to Europe, in giving to the French a decided advantage over their enemies. His Lordship proceeded to observe, that for two or three years antecedent to the commencement of the war, Government had declined interfering with the concerns of France; and in return for his friendly quiescence, the republicans had assailed our allies, fomented sedition and discontent in the bowels of our country, to overturn our government, and finally attacked us in openly avowed hostility. Not having interfered with them, his Lordship contended that France should not have interfered with us; and their making war upon us unprovoked, he said, undoubtedly gave us new rights; no man who knew the law of nations could question the propriety of our attacking them in every way that could conduce to our ultimate success, after they had provoked us to resistance on principles of self-defence. And he relied upon it, that no permanent peace could be hoped for with France, while the government there was acting on their present system; that is to say, interfering with all other governments. If, therefore, he were asked, what was the most speedy method of procuring peace, he would say, it was a change in that government; and he was persuaded, that a people of twenty-five millions could not, by any possibility, be held under a republican form of government: A proof of this was, that England, a nation of fewer people, and possessing for centuries a government which contained a portion of republicanism in its composition, found it impossible to sink into a form totally republican; and, after a lapse of fourteen years, gladly returned (at the Restoration) to the monarchical form of government.

With regard to an observation which had fallen from a Noble Duke, that, instead of adding to the national debt, we ought to raise the whole money wanted each year by taxes; the proposition, he contended, was a most visionary one. No man had ventured to go greater or bolder lengths that way, than his Right Hon. Friend at the head of the Treasury had done already in the case of the Spanish armament; in the present case he still had done much, by pledging himself, and the Parliament, to apply a million yearly to the sinking fund. Money, his Lordship added, never was so plentifully in circulation as at present: The conquest of the West India islands was a new and extraordinary source of wealth, and it would soon be found to be an astonishing means of increasing the national commerce, and

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and consequently increasing the national revenue. Those islands had, to his knowledge, produced to France ten millions yearly. We had already got two-thirds of them; so that there was a benefit accruing from the war of at least two-thirds of ten millions yearly; and he hoped shortly it would amount to the whole of that annual sum. This was not all; our manufacturers would be employed in increasing numbers, and wealth would by that means be daily flowing in upon us, in a constantly and uniformly increasing proportion.

The Marquis of Lansdown paid the Duke of Bedford some handsome compliments on the ability with which he had introduced his Resolutions; but said, that after the fate of the several propositions which had, in the course of the session, been submitted to the House by the Noble Lords who agreed with him on political subjects, and by himself, he could not entertain the hope that even the Resolutions proposed that night by his Noble Friend, would be agreed to; he hoped and believed, however, that the discussion would induce the moderate body of the people at large, which constituted the real power of the state, to assemble in a legal manner in the course of the summer, and express their decided opinion on the evils under which we laboured in prosecuting a war, the motives and grounds of which had been so often changed by ministers, and the termination of which appeared to be so distant. The Marquis said, he was convinced that the strong voice of the governed would ultimately produce upon the governing the salutary effect which it must always be attended with, that of awakening them to the true interests of the people. It could not be objected to the Noble Lords in Opposition, that they had any motive to induce them to wish for discontents or insurrections among the people. Would it not be found, upon the slightest view, that they had as great a property at stake as his Majesty's present ministers? Would it not appear, that they were not inferior in ability or integrity to the members of the Cabinet? The Noble Duke, who brought forward the Resolutions that day, was an eminent instance; it would not be said that he, who had the largest property in the country, could possibly wish for the introduction of anarchy. Was it to be supposed, that the Noble Duke in the Blue Ribbon (the Duke of Grafton), who had, with so much honour to himself, held the most exalted situations in the state, and superintended for so long time the Treasury of this country, who had so long retired to benefit his country in another way, by improvements in agriculture, came from his retirement for such purposes as those, which the enemies of the country were said to pursue, and had any inducement to confound all order? Or that the Noble

Earl near him (Derby), who possessed so many good things, and no man knew better the proper use of them, should have it in his contemplation to incite his neighbours of Preston, and the adjacent towns, to rapine and plunder?

It had been said, with somewhat like triumph, that the smallness of their numbers was no proof of the weakness of their arguments; small as their numbers were, he believed the present nine would soon increase to ninety: At any rate, small as the minority appeared, it was as numerous as his Majesty's cabinet; and in respect to character, riches, property, and abilities, he would leave it to the Country to determine, which had the pre-eminence. He trusted ministers would no longer level these calumnies at the Minority; the Country would judge to whom they were most applicable, the levellers, or those at whom they were levelled. There were in the country two other descriptions of men, alarmers and alarmists; he need not state which were in fact the worst; if the latter meant well, in their effects, at least, they were as dangerous as the others.

The sentiments of the Minority would, sooner or later, have their fair force, and, by timely attention to their advice, the miseries already incurred, and which he had anticipated, might have been averted.

The present was a period in which every man should perhaps repress the spirit of prophecy; so extraordinary had been the events of the present war, that the wisest speculations had been baffled. He could not, therefore, surmise what might be the future system of government in France; but were he to offer before that House his private opinion, he should think a federal union of the departments would be a system best adapted for the happiness of that country, and the advantage of this. It was chimerical to look for the restoration of Monarchy in France. Those who thought a coronation the cure for all political evil, likened the state of that country to our own previous to the Restoration. He saw not the most distant points of similarity. Cromwell had but little alienated property. The great bulk of the fortunes of this country stood unimpaired and unsequestered. The kingly power was therefore necessary; it was the centre of union, and the consolidation of interests. But no sober man could imagine for a moment, if France were brought to-morrow to accept a Sovereign of our dictation, that any thing like restoration and restitution of property could ever be made. The whole body of wealth had so totally passed away from its original possessors, that nothing like that sort of recompence could ever be expected, because it was *prima facie* impracticable.

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It had been stated, that no man was now suffered to possess more than two hundred a year : This the Noble Marquis denied. He said, that, from very respectable information, he was assured, that several large fortunes were still suffered to appertain to individuals untouched by the Executive Government.

His Lordship adverted to the situation of the allied armies on the Continent, which, he maintained, were unable to subjugate France, it having appeared, by experience, that the veteran troops of Austria and Prussia, conducted by the ablest generals of the age, had been inadequate to the attempt of conquering men who were inspired with an enthusiastic love of the welfare of their country. With regard to the English troops on the Continent, the devastation among them might be conceived, from the fact, that boys of sixteen years of age were captains of cavalry ; that, to replace the finest body of troops of that description, which perhaps the world ever saw, were sent out, horses which had never been ridden, and men that had never rode. The Marquis said, he would not at that late hour of the night intrude longer on their Lordships' time, but content himself with declaring, that from the most mature and dispassionate consideration he could give the conduct of ministers, he thought it of such a rash and unjustifiable nature, that if he had any personal animosity to them, he should not wish them to adopt different measures, as they must terminate in the confusion of their abettors and promoters ; and happy would it be for the country, if they only were likely to suffer for this misconduct ; but if the same prodigality they pursued should be persisted in, so that the resources of the country should be exhausted, which was not unlikely, the ruin would be general, and every individual must suffer. He ardently hoped that hostilities, which destroyed our best interests, would be pursued no longer, and that the present perilous experiment would be the last.—Before he sat down, the Marquis said the motion of adjournment was the most odious mode of negating the Resolutions of his Noble Friend (the Duke of Bedford) that could have been resorted to.

Lord Grenville felt it unnecessary to enter much upon a subject which, though ably and eloquently introduced by the Noble Duke who made the motion, wanted at least the grace of novelty. The various arguments adduced in support of the motion, their Lordships would recollect had been again and again urged in the course of the session, and as often repelled by reply on the part of individual Lords, and by the general decision of the House. He thought it right, however, on the present occasion, to counteract any impression which the de-

sponding speeches of some Noble Lords might possibly make upon the hopes and expectation of the Public. For this purpose, he would cursorily take the question in three points of view: First, as it regarded our comparative situation with the enemy in the progress of the war. Secondly, our resources in wealth and commerce, to continue it while necessary. And thirdly, the internal strength of this country contrasted with that of its adversary.

Not to dwell for the present upon the objects of the war, which must ever depend upon circumstances, and change with them, the leading object at every time must be the attainment of a secure and permanent peace. This was an object which the government of France, ever since the commencement of hostilities, had constantly put it out of our power to obtain. If we had entered into any negotiation with the persons who last year exercised the powers of government in France, the execution of Brissot and his confederates would shew us how delusive and vain such an attempt must have proved. And from a late proceeding of the Convention, it was manifest, the present government was as precarious and unsubstantial as that of its predecessors; Barrere, in his report of the conspiracy of his former colleague Danton, having declared, that if his arrest and execution had been suspended for a single day, the lives of the Committee of Public Safety, as well as those of the Convention, would indubitably have been the immediate and inevitable sacrifice. It had been argued, that the specific object of the war ought to be stated, that it might be known what were our prospects of peace. In no former war had ministers been called upon to make such a declaration. There was but one justifiable object in war; *viz.* peace; a secure, solid, and advantageous peace. But how was this to be effected? The Noble Duke had failed, where every person on his side of the House had failed, in stating with whom we could treat for peace. When, at the beginning of the present session, he had himself said, that there were no persons in France with whom we could treat, and that the authority of those in power was built on no stable foundation, he was answered, Is not there a second Constitution just established? Is there not an Executive Council? Are there not seven ministers of state? How stood the matter? The last miserable remnant of this miserable shadow of a Constitution was no more, the Executive Council was no longer in existence, the ministers of state had been all displaced, and the Convention itself was no more. One half of its members had been guillotined, and now that Robespierre and Barrere, to preserve their authority, had even sacrificed their old friend and help-mate Danton, they had the rest of that body, it was true, entirely at their

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disposal; but they would continue so only until some new demagogue, more dexterous than themselves, should establish his new despotism on the downfall of that of the present tyrants of France. Ministers were accused of having varied in their object. Before we were engaged in war, we had certainly professed and observed the strictest neutrality, and promised not to interfere in their internal concerns; being at war, were we to be bound by the professions made in time of peace? We were forced into a war by a most wanton aggression on the part of France on ourselves and our allies; we continued in that war because we could obtain no security that a similar aggression might not be renewed. Peace, he had already said, a secure, an honourable and advantageous peace, was the only just object of war; and to obtain this object, he did not see why we should not interfere with their internal concerns. He would go further, and would agree with a Noble Earl; that the only security we could obtain for a permanent peace, was, in restoring the monarchy and royalty of France. This was not restoring its ancient despotism; the abuses of the monarchy alone were despotic; the monarchy itself was not so.

Independent of the radical imperfection of such a government as obtained in France at this time, the present rulers shewed so inveterate a malignity to this country, that it would be folly to rely on the sincerity of their intentions, if indeed England had not too much at stake to admit of any compromise. When the Noble Marquis said, that the Peers of Opposition were not likely to sacrifice their property to the wild plans of Revolution, the Noble Marquis might have asked himself, whether the Government, and the great body of Parliament, might not also have some feelings of the same kind? Whether they had not some little abilities too? And whether there were not among them some entitled to the character of integrity?

He would not unnecessarily detain the House with any remarks on our comparative situation in the progress of the war. The slightest view would shew, that our advances were such as had never been exceeded in any first campaign with which our history was acquainted. He was anxious, however, to come to a circumstance mentioned in the course of debate, which was certainly of a nature that he little expected to hear; he meant the industry which was supposed to be used by his Majesty's servants to keep back the name of General Fox, or suppress that good opinion which his country ought to entertain of his services. He professed himself totally uninformed respecting those papers which the Noble Earl (Lauderdale) referred to: In the authentic accounts sent over by the illustrious

trious commander in chief, under whom General Fox served, he was mentioned with that eulogy which his gallant conduct called for ; and there was nothing which the ministers of his Majesty would more despise, than the meanness of under-rating the General's services on account of the political differences they might have with any of his connexions at home. He was a brave and gallant officer, and had, by his meritorious services, every just claim to the good opinion and gratitude of his country. In the conduct of every war, a nation must reasonably expect to meet with some of its vicissitudes ; and, with only that abatement, we might rely with confidence on the superiority of skill and discipline in our foldiers and officers, which could scarcely fail of producing a successful issue to the contest.—It had been said, that we had no prospect of success. He would challenge any Noble Lord to point out a page in history, where, after twelve years war, our successes had been stated to have been equal to those of the last twelve months. If we looked to foreign acquisitions, our advantages were unbounded. In the West Indies we had conquered almost all that the enemy possessed in those quarters, and which formerly furnished them with great resources for war. In the East, we must perceive, that not a place was left which France could call her own ; and this was a sufficient argument to shew our maritime and commercial superiority. The trade of those distant dependencies would pour new streams of wealth into the lap of Great Britain ; and such was at this moment the flourishing state of our commerce and our credit, however expensive and unavoidable the continuance of the war, the nation hitherto had felt little inconvenience from its pressure. He was not afraid to meet the Noble Duke as to the successes in Flanders, although he seemed to lay so much stress upon our losses there. If the Noble Duke would consider the situation of the French at present, and compare it with their situation when first we engaged in the war, he would find that our successes had been brilliant indeed.

In contrast with this picture, he placed the miserable condition of France, its desperate resources, annihilated commerce, and its ruined revenues. All property in that country was perfectly destroyed. A decree of the Convention would shew that no man in France could possess a property of more than 200l. annual income ; nor was there any reason to doubt that a decree of that nature would be executed with all the rigour and injustice in which it originated. With respect to the extent and numbers of the disaffection which prevailed in France to the existing government, he was willing to own that it must be viewed speculatively, and considered only as matter of opinion. To men who had any feeling, and felt the advantages

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advantages and comforts of any social order, it would, however, be a fair inference that the disaffection must be extensive.

It might not be easy to know whether there were any powerful bodies of men in arms against the *Convention*; but the letters of its own Commissioners would explain, that, in all the north-west provinces, there was scarcely an individual man who owned any obedience to the present oppressors.

If the feelings of the House could bear the recitals, even such as those were which had reached us of the horrid carnage every day committed at Lyons, Toulon, and other provinces of France, it would not admit of a doubt, but the majority of the people felt their shocking situation, and were only prevented, by their fears of immediate punishment and death, from uniting to overthrow a tyranny which, in the nature of things, must be of short duration. Thus circumstanced, it was of course to be expected, that the cause of the allies would be greatly assisted in the interior of France; and that numbers who now were submissive under the influence of terror, would readily co-operate with us, whenever they had a prospect of success. Flattering as this prospect of affairs was, he was ready to admit, that if the view was totally reversed, and our circumstances as bad as any man could paint them, he would still persevere in trying the effect of war, and rely upon the spirit of Britons, to hazard a last effort, and bravely perish in arms, rather than resign at the feet of their assailants the inestimable advantages of order and civilization. Finding, on the other hand, that we had every thing in our favour to inspire confidence of success, he would resist any motion like that brought forward by the Noble Duke, which could have no other effect than depressing the courage of the people, swelling the pride of our enemies, and insinuating a spirit of distrust and disunion amongst our allies.

When the Chancellor was putting the question, *Lord Auckland* rose to remark, that if his motion should pass as a mere question of adjournment, it would subject their Lordships to the inconvenience of meeting on the following day (Saturday); he therefore amended his motion, to adjourn to Monday. He took the occasion to observe, on what had been said by the Noble Marquis (*Lord Lansdown*), who had given to the motion the epithet "odious," and had treated it as the most exceptionable form of negating the propositions that day. Far from being odious, it was the only proper motion, unless their Lordships were disposed (which he trusted they were not) to enter into separate debates on the several Resolutions, in order to negative some, and to put the previous question on others.

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He did not, however, object to the motion being considered by the Noble Marquis as odious : He differed from him so essentially as to the principles and objects of the war, and as to the whole substance of the present discussion, that he was neither surprised nor mortified to find that they differed as to Parliamentary forms.

The Duke of Bedford declared himself unwilling to occupy much of their Lordships time in reply at so late an hour, and particularly as he saw, from the tendency of the speeches against his motion, that no prospect opened for a termination of the war. He had listened with the greatest attention, and hoped, but in vain, that the Noble Secretary of State, or some of his friends, would have stated that, from the successes and advantages already gained by our armies and fleets, or from some other cause, there was a probability of the blessings of peace being restored to this country ; but not one word on that point had been uttered. It might be true, that, at present, the people felt not the pressure of those burdens which the nation was incurring ; but it must also be observed, that the time would come, when these feelings would inevitably be excited, and when their indignation against the ministers, who were the cause of the calamity, might unfortunately stretch itself to the general confusion of the country. There were many of the measures of Administration for which he allowed them every merit, nor would he now impugn the motives altogether of their conduct ; but he wished them to reflect seriously upon those dangers to which they were exposing their country. The prospect of peace was, he said, dismal and distant indeed, if we were only to look for it in the issue of a war which was to exterminate *twenty-five millions* of people. He scouted the idea of deriving security from any particular form of government in any particular set of men. Give a great nation such a peace as a great nation has a right to expect and receive, and that would be the best security for its permanent continuance.

From the language held by ministers and their supporters that day, the Duke said it appeared to him that France was to consider that it was to have no peace with this country at all, without conforming to our dictates of the sort of government it ought to adopt. He would not dispute but our troops might be much superior to the enemy in discipline, and our generals in skill, but he distrusted their final success against a foe whose numbers almost exceeded calculation. He bestowed a very high panegyric upon the illustrious Prince who led the British forces, and was sure, that if success was to be attained, the fame of that illustrious Personage would make it certain.

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He also allowed that our foreign conquests, in different parts of the globe, reflected honour on our arms, and obtained glory for our commanders; but he could perceive no solid advantage in those acquisitions, other than as they might be made the instruments of procuring the sovereign object, a General Peace. The motive which he had in giving to his Resolutions the shape in which he had proposed them, was, not to offend any of their Lordships by what might be deemed an improper interference with the Royal Prerogative.

He considered the sense of the manufacturers to be against the war; he could foresee no advantages that would accrue from its continuance, and wished to prevent those consequences which might result from its imposing new taxes upon a people already burthened as much as they could bear. Without being answerable for the success of his propositions, he would console himself with the reflection of having done his duty. As to the charge made against him, of treating the name of Barrere with too little respect, he would only say, that he spoke of him as he felt. He approved the first Revolution, which promised to restore liberty to France. The circumstances that since succeeded it, excited his utmost abhorrence; and he could not esteem a man who was a leader in such transactions. If, however, he paid Barrere no compliment, he did not at least disgrace him, when he placed him in the same line of argument which he thought it necessary to apply to the ministers of this country. Having briefly, but ably, combated what had been said against his string of Resolutions, his Grace sat down, when the question was called for, and the House divided; for the adjournment.

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Majority 101

List of the Minority in the House of Lords on the Duke of Bedford's Motion,

Dukes of Bedford,	Earls of Thanet,
Norfolk, and	Albemarle,
Grafton,	Egmont, and
Marq. of Lansdown,	Stanhope,
Earl of Guildford,	Lords Chedworth, and
Lauderdale,	St. John,
Derby,	

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

FRIDAY, May 30.

The French Property Bill, after some objections stated by *Sir Francis Baring*, and replied to by the *Solicitor General*, was read a third time and passed.

MOTION FOR PEACE.

Mr. Fox rose and said, that it had occurred to him that it was the duty of a person thinking as he had thought of the present lamentable and disastrous war, to afford the House an opportunity of reviewing the situation of public affairs, and of drawing those inferences which past transactions might warrant. He was sensible that, on a subject so often discussed as the present, no new observations could be made, no new lights thrown out; but it was his wish to fix the attention of the House upon some recent events that had taken place, and to deduce such conclusions from those events, as, in the judgment of every dispassionate man, must be obvious and incontrovertible. First, with respect to the origin of the war: It was not his intention to offer any remarks on the fact of aggression, or to endeavour to decide whether that aggression had been committed by the French or by the allies. It had appeared to him, that one of the greatest advantages of a free constitution consisted in the publicity with which all its affairs were transacted. He had for that reason hoped that it was impossible for us to be plunged into a war upon false pretences, for one thing to be held up to the people as the cause, and another to be pursued by ministers as the end. Here, however, his hopes had deceived him; that usual publicity had not been practised in the present war; the real principles on which it was commenced, and had been continued, had been concealed; he was therefore entitled to assert, that the people of Great Britain have never given their consent to the war.

At the commencement of the last session, the speech delivered by his Majesty, insisted on the strict neutrality which his Majesty had observed; and the address, returned in course to that speech, sanctioned the system which had been adopted. *Mr. Fox* observed, that it was not only at the commencement of the French Revolution that this system had been practised, but that subsequent even to the destruction of the Monarchy of France, in 1792, and after many of those atrocities had been committed, at the view of which every feeling mind shrank with horror, it was still held forth to the view of the people. His Majesty thought at that time, and wisely thought, in his opinion,

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opinion, that it was not the duty of this country to interfere in the domestic government of another. Thus, notwithstanding the French had overthrown one form of government, and erected another; notwithstanding all the calamitous events that occurred in France; notwithstanding all the horrors practised in that country; notwithstanding that many acts had been done in France, of which it was difficult to say whether they were more calculated to move pity or to excite indignation, neutrality was still the word in the mouths of ministers, and neutrality still continued to influence the conduct of his Majesty. Ministers said fairly, that if the French should make an unprovoked attack on any of our allies, or pursue plans of aggrandizement, which, if accomplished, would render it difficult to oppose any attack they might afterwards make, we must take part in the war. Great pains were taken to persuade the House, that their attempt to open the navigation of the Scheldt was an aggression upon our allies the Dutch; and however ludicrously or contemptuously that had been since treated as the cause of the war, he appealed to the recollection of the House, whether it was not at first the point principally insisted upon. To settle the dispute upon this point, he had recommended negotiation to the House, and the House refused to adopt it. But although the House decided against it, ministers thought it convenient to follow his recommendation. They had recourse not to an open and manly, but to an underhand and equivocal mode of negotiation, which, even if meant honestly, could hardly fail of defeating its own purpose. But ministers, in their negotiation, by their inimical conduct, by refusing to acknowledge that those with whom they were treating had any power to treat, took the sure course of rendering it ineffectual. Their object was to pretend a negotiation, and to pursue such means as must make it fail. It failed accordingly. The war was then commenced; but even at that period, when the influence of a system of neutrality was destroyed and gone, even at that period, he never heard the principles of interfering in the government of France avowed. On the contrary, he heard it explicitly and repeatedly asserted, that the continuance even of the power of France in the hands of those persons who then possessed it, was not a fundamental objection to peace. Such had been the statement, such the mode of conduct which seemed to actuate the Government in the last session of Parliament. During the recess, several declarations were made in his Majesty's name, which, though inconsistent in themselves, evinced the departure of Administration from that line of action which they had hitherto pursued. When Dumourier declared against the Convention, and proposed

posed marching to Paris, the Prince of Saxe Cobourg, in the name of the Emperor, published a proclamation, in which he asserted, that it was the intention of his master to restore to France the constitution of 1789; and that all the towns taken by his Imperial Majesty, should be taken possession of in the name of Louis the Seventeenth, and held in trust for him till that constitution should be restored. True it was, that the proclamation was in a few days retracted, to the disgrace of all who were parties in it (and he could not see how we could avoid incurring a share of the disgrace and infamy of that transaction); we saw the Emperor, as dead to all sense of shame as unfeeling with respect to every principle of justice, within five days after it had been issued, annul that declaration, and assert, that it had not produced any effect upon France. What could be found to match this, even in the conduct of those who governed France? It appeared to have been done as if the Emperor had feared that the King of Prussia's perfidy to Poland might stand unparalleled, and he himself could not be considered as a fit member of the confederacy, till he had done something sufficiently infamous to keep his ally in countenance. In a cause, which we were so often told was the cause of morality, virtue, and religion, he trusted that his Majesty, for his own and the national honour, would not only disclaim all participation in such acts, but deny that he gave them the smallest degree of countenance.

He called upon the House next to turn their attention to the terms proposed by the Toulonese to Lord Hood, and to the declaration made by his Lordship. In consequence of that declaration, by which he bound himself to support the constitution of 1789, and pledged himself to protect all Frenchmen who should repair to that standard, he had been admitted into the town. Subsequent, indeed, to that period, another declaration appeared, verbose, obscure, and equivocal, materially differing from the former: In that second declaration, notwithstanding the long phrases with which it abounded, for the purpose of preventing the communication of any distinct idea to the mind by the perusal, notwithstanding the rubbish with which it was loaded, they might collect from it, that it was not the intention of Great Britain to make peace with the present French Government.

Thus did our avowed objects progressively change. It had been argued that, subsequent to the commencement of a war, it might be proper to change the nature of that war. Be it so; for the sake of argument, he allowed that position; but he contended, that those who maintained it, did not do well to use that declaration, by which they sought to lead the people to

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to their ruin, and attempted to persuade them that this was the cause of religion, morality, and of the rights of all civilized society. If the aggression on Holland, which had been asserted to be the real cause of the war, had not taken place, religion, morality, and the cause of all civilized society, might have been left by Great Britain either to other defenders, or to take care of themselves. Ministers having thus, according to their own statement, commenced the war on a principle of policy alone, he maintained, that they had no right to boast of the support which they had afforded to those principles which were at present the constant subject of their declamation. Let Gentlemen see why it was more necessary on principles of policy to interfere in the government of France this year than it had been at the commencement of the war? Had the necessity arisen from our *successes* at Toulon? or from that system of penetrating into France with a force which, considering the Earl of Moira's army as that force, had not yet left our shores? It certainly had not. We had disclaimed peace with the present rulers, and we had disclaimed interfering in the internal government of France. But how had we disclaimed interfering? We were at the present time actually interfering, and our interference was of the most objectionable kind.

It had been said in that House, by persons of high authority, that we were not at war for the purpose of restoring this or that constitution. We were then at war, not for building, but for pulling down; not for producing any partial alteration in any system, but for effecting the total destruction of that system. Let Gentlemen try that mode of conduct by principles of policy. Suppose we succeeded in overthrowing the present government of France, what were we then to do? Having destroyed one tyranny, we had set up another. We had said to the people of France, "Do you, of whose moderation, of whose wisdom and justice, of whose temperance and humanity, we have had so many instances for these last five years, do you assemble again; again recur to first principles as you did in 1789; erect any future government you think proper, a monarchy or a republic, only do not set up a Jacobin government." In that wild manner were we producing, perhaps, a continuation of that misery, horror, and devastation, which we had so often deplored. "Shew me (said Mr. Fox) the policy of such a system, and I will prove it to be faithless; I will prove that it will lead you to deceit and perfidy. You may, by the adoption of it, be betraying the supporter of the ancient monarchy, the supporter of republicanism, and the man who steers a middle course between these two extremes. You may be surrendering the middle man to the

the rage of the two furious parties; you may be reducing him to the necessity of contending with both, of struggling without receiving any assurance of support from you, or without being cheered with a hope, that you mean to assist in the establishment of any form of government. So much for the interference you profess, and which can only gain you friends whom you must betray." Was this, he asked, mere theory? Had they not heard it declared by a Noble Lord (Lord Mulgrave), in a speech (which, though it was not regular to allude to speeches spoken in that House, might be adverted to with more propriety than any other, because it was rather a history than a speech), had they not heard it declared by that Noble Lord, though some of the inhabitants of Toulon were adverse to the old government, some to the new, yet that these enmities would again break out with all their wonted fury, when the British arms were withdrawn? What, therefore, he most particularly contended was, that when we entered into the war, we entered into it on defensive principles, and that, according to the minister's own statement, we should not have been drawn into it, if France had respected the neutrality of our ally; that, nothing having occurred to change the principles on which the war was commenced, they were at that time called upon to continue it on another principle, and that the people had been deluded by false pretences, to spend their money and their blood, for purposes to which, if fairly stated to them in the first instance, they would not have consented, and had thus been induced to support the war on a motive which was not the real motive.

With respect to the mode in which the war had been carried on, he owned he had often altered his speculations. He would state to the House a strong fact, which struck his mind on reviewing the operations of the last campaign. When he looked at these operations for the purpose of collecting the intention of the king's ministers, he asked himself this question; "Are they abiding by the declaration of the Prince of Saxe-Cobourg?" and he resolved the question in the affirmative. When the last campaign commenced there was a civil war in France. When he observed that in that campaign we had gained only two important successes, that Valenciennes was taken by the Duke of York, and Mentz by the King of Prussia, he looked to the articles of capitulation, to see whether we acted merely as a power engaged in a foreign war, or whether we meant to interfere in the civil contests in France. In these articles he saw that the garrisons were forbidden to carry arms during the war against Austria, Prussia, Great Britain, and the other allied powers; but they were not forbidden to fight against

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against the insurgents in La Vendée. If he had the honour of advising his Majesty on this subject, perhaps he should not have imitated their mode of conduct; but he thought that ministers, however unwilling to adopt it, had adopted it for the purpose of refuting the calumnies of those, who contended that Administration meant to interfere in the government of France, and of proving, that, so far from entertaining any such intentions, they had even resolved to send the garrisons of Mentz and Valenciennes into France, for the purpose of bearing arms against the insurgents. In the subsequent part, however, of the campaign, that conduct was effaced; but not in another; because, if there were any crime or reproach in it, all the crime and reproach remained; and all the inferences in favour of the preceding declaration were effaced; and it would naturally be asked, by what? By Lord Hood's declaration to the Toulonese, by his Majesty's subsequent declaration, and by preparing an army for the avowed purpose of co-operating with those very Royalists.

Having thus shewn the inconsistent mode of conduct which ministers had adopted with respect to the war, he would proceed to another view of the subject. Ministers and their supporters had formerly contended, that if we suffered France to aggrandize herself at the expence of the Emperor and the King of Sardinia, we might have to contend against her increased power when our present allies, offended at our neutrality, would not assist us; and that the opportunity of opposing and crippling the power of France was a fair one, and ought not to be neglected. He did not see the force of that argument at the time it was used, because he predicted that ours would be a pecuniary part in the present war. Were we then afraid of disgusting the Emperor? If the Emperor had concluded a peace with France, it must have been productive of advantages to this country, and been fortunate for Europe; and the barrier of the Netherlands, which the mistaken policy of a former reign had demolished, might have been restored. Were we afraid of disgusting our ally the King of Prussia? Might we not have waited till that disgust took place, before we subsidized him? We had entered into various conventions with other powers. One of these, the convention with his Sardinian Majesty, had been so fully discussed already, that it was unnecessary to enlarge upon it again; one observation, however, he must beg leave to make: In that convention, Great Britain agreed not to lay down her arms till she had reconquered all that territory which had been wrested from her; and that agreement, he said, had been entered into without an equivalent advantage on the part of Great Britain. It was replied

plied to him, that we had adopted the same conduct in the war of the succession, and in the war which was terminated by the peace of Aix la Chapelle. It was urged, that his Sardinian Majesty might be an active ally of France, if he were not subsidized by the powers combined against France. It was insisted, that the most powerful diversion might be made by the King of Sardinia. Let Gentlemen look at the state of the war. What diversion had his Sardinian Majesty produced? Would the incursion of the French into Piedmont be a favourable circumstance to the allies? Might it not be productive of the most alarming consequences? Did ministers think that the power of Sardinia would be alone sufficient to save Italy? They could not think so; they must be convinced, that if Italy were in danger from the power of the French, that danger could alone be averted by a large body of Austrian troops. He was not asking what might be the state of Italy then; ministers on that head must be better informed than he was; but if the accounts he heard were true, they presented to the view the most gloomy aspect. He heard of something infinitely more alarming than all the successes of the French, which was, that the lower orders of the people in Italy entertained an opinion, that any change which might tend to overthrow the present Austrian government would be for the better. What was the state of the war in Italy? The French had entered Piedmont in two places; and, if the accounts in the public papers were true, at that moment threatened Turin. It had been reported, that a large body of Austrians was on its march from the Milanese to relieve Piedmont. He hoped the report might be true; but in whose favour would the diversion in Italy operate? In favour of the French undoubtedly, by rendering the diversion of a large body of Austrians in Italy absolutely necessary, and thus weakening the Emperor's exertions in Flanders.

Another observation he would offer on the subject of the convention was, that we had entered into conventions with Russia, Prussia, Austria, and other powers; and in all these conventions there was this general clause, That Great Britain would not lay down her arms till each nation had recovered those dominions which might have been conquered from her. That clause, as far as it related to Russia, was ridiculous. With respect to Prussia and Austria, the bargain might be a fair one; but it was of importance to consider that that guarantee extended to all the other belligerent powers. Did they extend the same guarantee to this country? Prussia had already laid down her arms without taking notice of it. Had the Emperor made the guarantee? They were told that he had

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not. It appeared, therefore, that Great Britain was the only nation that had extended this guarantee to all the other powers, and that those powers had not extended it to her, and thus we alone were bound to continue a war, now declared to be a war *ad internecionem*, and consequently of incalculable duration. There were, he knew, in the treaty, proper words, expressive of the "perfect confidence and amity" which were to subsist between the two countries. Did those words mean any thing? Or were they mere words of course? Was the King of Prussia to carry on the war on the same principles, and for the same objects, as we did? Yes, said his Prussian Majesty in 1792. But what was his language in 1793? "That circumstances would not permit him to prosecute the war." Did he say that any unexpected events had occurred? Had he been forced into a war with Sweden and Denmark? What then were those circumstances? The exhausted state of his finances? Had his Prussian Majesty sustained losses, had he experienced any great defeats? No; we were told that the last campaign had been successful beyond the most sanguine expectations. Was then the exhausted state of his finances an unforeseen occurrence? No; but his Prussian Majesty had at length found out that war was expensive, that it tended to exhaust his finances, and that his victories would cost him something. He must, therefore, have known these things would happen; it was clear, that the words, "as far as circumstances will permit," were fraudulent, inasmuch as they could only mean to the end of the campaign, when his Prussian Majesty knew that his treasury would be exhausted. It had been stated, that the war was the common cause of the civilized world, and Europe, we had been assured, would join in it. A great confederacy, indeed, had been formed; but many of the powers of Europe had not joined us, and it was reasonable to conclude, that they had not the same apprehensions of danger; but if the war was really a general concern, why was it made to some powers a particular one? Austria, he acknowledged, had furnished large resources; and, by the valour and discipline of her troops too, gained great military fame. But was that all the assistance which his Imperial Majesty was to afford? Was he to bear no share in the expence? It was well known that Prussia, previously to her application to this country, had applied to Austria for assistance, who refused to accede to her demands.

It was known that the Emperor, whose dominions extended over such an enlarged scale of territory, who possessed dominions so various in their productions, and part of which dominions was particularly fertile; that that Emperor, who was also sovereign

of that unhappy territory which was now the seat of war, and the wealth of whose inhabitants was scarce exceeded by that of the merchants of London and Amsterdam; it was known, he said, that he was unable to raise his loan in Brabant or Holland, and that he had been forced to come to this country. He understood, that ministers had neither given their explicit approbation or disapprobation to this loan. But that circumstance shewed, that the Emperor had no resource but in Great Britain. It was possible that the English might think any security which he might offer suspicious; and if they should entertain such sentiments, where would he be able to fill another loan? He must then apply to Government, in the same manner as the King of Prussia had done. With such high-flown principles as were entertained by ministers, how were we to refuse him? Austria, if it be necessary to destroy the Jacobin government of France, must be considered, not merely as a necessary ally, but as the very soul of the alliance. Thus would this country be carried on from expence to expence, from subsidy to subsidy.

Under such views, and entertaining these sentiments, he conceived it to be his duty to propose some rational means by which peace might be procured. This effect was, in his opinion, to be procured only by two modes; either by treating with France, or by pursuing our conquests in such a manner as to force our adversary to make peace. Between these two modes, there might indeed be an intermediate one. In answer to the first of these propositions, it might be said, that the existence of such a government as the present one of France, must subvert all other governments. To that argument he should reply, that the House had never sanctioned that dangerous speculation, and that experience proved it to be the will of Providence, that monarchies, oligarchies, aristocracies, republics, might exist in all their several varieties in different parts of the world, and that governments whose principles were directly adverse to each other, might not only exist without injury to each other, but might exist in friendship and alliance. Let us make, therefore, a trial; propose peace to France; and if we should afterwards be deceived, we could then recur to war. It would be much more easy to proceed from peace to war, than from a ruinous war to an advantageous peace. If it were true, as had often been asserted, that we could not be safe without the destruction of the French government, melancholy, indeed, was the truth. The government of France had already stood two years; the first campaign was particularly disastrous; the second had been stated to be most brilliant and successful; be it so, but it would

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would not be denied, that the government of France was more powerful at that period, than it had been at any period since the revolution. What inference was to be drawn from that circumstance? An inference most discouraging indeed to those who were advocates for the prosecution of the war. We found that a celebrated commander (the Duke of Brunswick) in the first campaign had been compelled to retreat from France with precipitation and disgrace. We found that the second campaign was brilliant and successful; but that brilliancy, and that success, produced no advantage to the allied powers; and the government of France was no more affected by our successes than by our disgraces. He required no other proof than that. He then said, that, in carrying on the war *ad internecionem*, we were in a most dreadful situation; for we found our enemy rise on defeat, and that in proportion to our successes were the means of resistance on the part of that enemy multiplied and increased. Unless, therefore, we effected every thing, we should fall short of the object necessary to be obtained.

Nil actum reputant, si quid superesset agendum.

If we did not destroy the government of France, we should have done nothing. Such a situation, calamitous and melancholy at any time, must be particularly so at the present moment, when we considered the exhausted state, and the inability of our allies. If, therefore, ministers would condescend to be instructed by the wisdom of former times, if they would vouchsafe to pursue the example of their ancestors, they would then be induced to make peace; and the successes which had attended our arms, would only afford additional reasons for adopting that mode of conduct. In various parts of the world victory had attended our operations. In the West Indies we had taken Martinique, St. Lucie, Guadaloupe, and a great part of St. Domingo. We had also driven the French from the East Indies. These advantages would be eminently useful in making peace; whereas they could not at all conduce to the success of that system by which the government of France was attempted to be destroyed. They were every thing for negotiation, and nothing for destruction. With respect to the mode of treating, he never yet heard but one rational objection, which was, that France was not in a negociable state; and the manner in which that objection had been defended was, that there was no man in France who could answer for the conduct of another. At the time that objection was first urged, he did not think it valid or substantial, but he was sure that it was not then so. He trusted that no man would think him a friend to the French government; and he also hoped

that he should not be thought willing to pay a compliment to tyranny, when he asserted that the government of France could coerce its subjects; and that, if that government wished to declare war against the Swiss Cantons, and even against America, they would be obeyed. If, therefore, the French government possessed the power to make war, it must also possess the power to make peace; and if, as had been stated, it were necessary to use force, for the purpose of compelling the people of France to go to the field and make war, it surely must require less force to induce them to make peace. It had ever been the policy of France to maintain a friendly intercourse with some adjacent powers; and, in pursuance of that policy, she had been enabled to preserve her neutrality with several states. He hoped that we should be able to preserve ours in Europe, and *elsewhere*, as well as France had done. He was ready to allow, that it was one thing to propose peace, and another to obtain it.

All cases of that nature, undoubtedly, were subject to great uncertainty, and with a nation in a state so anomalous as that of France, all events must be peculiarly doubtful; but where could be the danger of the proposition? Should we lose our allies by it? No. Besides, having made the proposition, the Convention and the committees would be no longer able to delude the people, by making them believe that they were fighting for their liberties and their most valuable rights. They might employ terror, but that would then be their only resource. Nor would these be all the advantages that would result from such a mode of conduct. The House would convince this kingdom of the sincerity of their wishes for peace; they would relieve men, who believed that the principles of the present war were not friendly to the general cause of freedom, from that repugnance which they must experience.

The House would indulge him in another observation on the idea of destroying the French government. Some men, of warm imaginations and great abilities, had thought the prevalence of French principles must produce a considerable effect in all other countries. He doubted the doctrine when he first heard it; and the more he examined, the more he disliked it. To such an opinion he always objected, that it was unsound; and that it led to that barbarous system of intolerance, which he had hoped had been banished from the world. Let them look to the causes and effects of these principles. It was generally thought that American principles possessed a considerable influence in the French revolution; and if we sought the parentage and pedigree of this opinion, we should find that it was extremely plausible. If we traced the source of the American

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rican principles, we should find that source in Great Britain. The Americans received not their principles and opinions from the wandering Indians, nor from Mexico or Peru—they carried them with them from England. He should therefore, indeed, pause a long time, before he stated, that, because such principles might lead to anarchy and confusion, that therefore all persons possessing such principles ought to be exterminated; for if he did make such statement, he must also be prepared to contend, that America and Great Britain must be the most guilty countries in the world; and with respect to these principles of liberty and equality, which had been so much abused, whence did we deduce them? from the ancients? No; their writings produced merely a general effect in favour of liberty; but if we proceeded to an analysis of their writings, we should find that they tended to no given and defined system of liberty. Did we then derive these principles from the East Indies, or from the Mogul government? No. From Great Britain alone; from a system of philosophy (if that word might now be used), and from those grand reservoirs of wisdom and truth, Locke and Sydney. What did he argue from this? that if such principles were to be opposed by despotic powers, the English opinions, writings of philosophers, must be most odious and detestable; and that if it should ever happen that the despotic nations of Europe should be at war with us, Great Britain must be an object of much greater reprobation and abhorrence than France, inasmuch as truth was always more dangerous, because more powerful than error. The government of Berlin, which must disgust every man, might then think the true principles of justice more abominable than we did the present French principles.

Mr. Fox said, he had used every argument that occurred to his mind in favour of some Resolutions which it was his intention to submit to the House. As it was, however, probable that these Resolutions might not be acceded to, it was his intention to say something in favour of another Resolution which he should offer to Gentlemen's consideration; because, if it was determined, by the rejection of the first set of Resolutions, that it was proper to proceed in the attempt to destroy the French government, he should then contend, that their determination ought to be openly and solemnly avowed; and that we should declare, that we were at war for the purpose of obtaining some given and explicit order of government in France, because every emigrant would then know for what he was fighting. If we declared that they were contending for the restoration of the old government, they would then be joined by all those who wished the restoration of that despotism. If they

they stated, that it was their intention to restore the constitution of 1791, they would then be joined by the supporters of that constitution. The same argument might be used, if their object should be the establishment of a rational republic. In that latter case, they would not certainly be joined by emigrants, but by many persons in France, where, he believed, that so great was the abhorrence of the ancient despotism, that the name of a republic was popular. If, however, they proceeded without such an explicit declaration as he had mentioned, they might be joined by hands, but they would have no hearts in their favour. They would have men who might suspect that they meant to betray them. They would be followed by unhappy victims, who might be fighting for that which ministers did not mean to establish. He therefore repeated, that he certainly should attempt to procure an explicit declaration of the objects of the present unfortunate war.

The House would perceive, that he had studiously avoided all observations on the military conduct of the war. On that subject, he had stated his opinion before in his sentiments on the manner in which our trade had been protected; which sentiments were by no means altered, when he believed the Right Hon. Gentleman opposite to him would not have an opportunity of insisting, with such a triumphant tone, on the price of insurance, as an incontrovertible criterion, by which a judgment might be formed of the protection afforded to our trade. He had looked with that anxiety common to them all on the operations in Flanders. During the present campaign we had taken a town of considerable note. The French had also taken some of our towns. We had destroyed many of the enemy, and we had, alas! lost many of our own soldiers. He must own that he felt some curiosity to know the amount of the loss of men since the commencement of the present war. In looking to the Gazette, he found it difficult to gratify that curiosity, but he believed that it would not be too much to compute the loss of the French alone at 200,000 men! What then must be the power of that country which was able to afford such losses? We had reduced Landrecies, and what was the consequence? Another part of the French army made such an impression, as to render it necessary for us to employ our whole force against them. And yet, with all that force, with all those energies which we employed, and all those laurels which we had won, we had not been able to drive them from their position. Looking thus at the state of the campaign, surveying the frontier of France, and the myriads of men in arms, he must consider the conquest of that country as more desperate than ever. Let them recollect the

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opinion which our allies entertained of the enemy. Let them read the King of Prussia's declaration, and the papers lately published by the Emperor. He had perused a paper, in which his Imperial Majesty bestowed great encomiums on the conduct of the five columns of the allies employed in the action of the 17th, in which he said that there never was an attack more admirably concerted, or more bravely conducted. When, therefore, he found that that attack failed, was he to impute that failure to any error in the plan, or in the execution? The Emperor's paper forbade him to entertain such sentiments. Was he then to impute the ill success to the elements? No; he was to impute it to the hedges and ditches of Flanders. That however was not a circumstance unforeseen by the Emperor. It was not more unforeseen by his Imperial Majesty, than the expences of the war were by the King of Prussia. The latter would have proceeded in the war, if war had not been attended with expence. The five columns of the former would have been successful in Flanders, had not there been an intersected country. Since the 17th, a great victory had been gained, in which, from peculiar circumstances*, he must be supposed to rejoice; but in what had it been successful? The only effect of that victory was, not to dislodge the French from their position in Flanders, but to avert a great danger from the allied army. What he had hitherto observed, related only to the army of the North. If, however, we looked to the other armies of France, the view would be equally gloomy and unfortunate. Under all these circumstances, he contended, that there was not more reason to be sanguine about the final issue of the war, and the destruction of the Jacobin government in France, by external force, than there was at the commencement of the war. It appeared therefore to him, that the present was the proper period to recur to that principle of policy, which was adopted at the commencement of the contest.

He had hitherto confined himself to Europe; and it was not his intention to make many observations with respect to America. We had heard a paper, which might possibly be a forgery; but the facility with which it had obtained general belief, was no slight circumstance. Our situation with America was critical: They had issued an order which we wisely recalled; but we had other disputes, which were not yet settled. That country, governed by a man, the wisest and best of the age in which he lived, would endeavour as much as possible to avoid a rupture with Great Britain. These endeavours, however, might fail from the heat of America, and the inter-

* The gallant conduct and success of his brother in the action, which was crowned with victory.

perance of Great Britain. Of the means of offence, America it was true, was not possessed on any large scale, but she could find abundant means to harass and annoy us; and against her we could not strike a blow that would not be as severely felt in London as in America. If we commenced another crusade against her, we might destroy her trade, and check the progress of her agriculture, but we must also equally injure ourselves. Desperate, therefore, indeed, must be that war in which each wound inflicted on our enemy must at the same time inflict a wound upon ourselves. He trusted that such an event as a war with America would not happen; but whether it did or not, he contended that each day afforded additional reasons for negotiating a peace with France.

Mr. Fox concluded by moving the first of fourteen Resolutions; which were exactly the same in substance as those moved by his Grace the Duke of Bedford in the House of Lords.

Mr. Jenkinson said, that it was not his intention to occupy, for any considerable length, the time of the House; he should confine himself to answer those parts of the Right Hon. Gentleman's speech which seemed most connected with the subject of the debate, and not follow him through all the miscellaneous topics he had been pleased to advance. The great object of his exertions appeared to him to be to prove, that ministers had changed the object of the war, and that, instead of a war undertaken professedly for the protection of our allies, and on principles of self-defence, it had been changed into an avowed intention of interfering in the internal constitution of France. In opposition to that statement, he should beg leave to remind the House, that the exclusive navigation of the Scheldt was not the sole cause for which we had been obliged to engage in hostilities against France. He should beg leave to state once more to the House, what were the real grounds of the present war: The first certainly was the protection of our allies from invasion and insult; the second cause was those views of aggrandizement which the ruling powers of France avowed, and their professed determination to propagate their new-fangled and destructive doctrines, through this and every country in Europe, by the sword; and the third cause of hostilities was the insult peculiarly offered to this country by the French Convention. These various reasons, avowed and acted upon at the commencement, proved incontestibly, that the war, in its origin, neither was, nor could be supposed to be purely defensive. In order to enable the House to form a correct decision upon the present question, let him remind Gentlemen of the precise declaration made by his Majesty's ministers upon a former occasion, when the war had been, as it was that night,

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the subject of discussion; in which declaration they openly avowed, and in that avowal met the approbation of those Gentlemen on the other side of the House, that their object was indemnity for the past, and security for the time to come. With that acknowledged object in view, he was free to admit, without entering into any discussion upon the subject, that if indemnity, and future security, were attainable, the war ought to be brought to the most speedy conclusion; but their objects, however desirable, were, in his opinion, under the present circumstances, impossible to be obtained; and upon this point he was ready to meet, and risque the issue of, the present question.

In the course of a former debate he had asserted, and he repeated the assertion, that, contrary to all former wars in which that country had been engaged, there was no security which we could obtain, that, from any probable appearance of its continuance, could induce us to put an end to the present war. The peace of Ryfwick, at the time when Louis XIV. entertained wild and ambitious views of aggrandizement, destructive of the balance of power, and dangerous to the general independence of Europe, might be considered a wise measure as a temporary expedient, because some rational hope could be entertained of its duration for at least some time; and if it lasted but two, three, or four years, yet it was as desirable for the one side as the other, because it enabled each party to recruit its exhausted strength, and meet its antagonist upon more fair and equal terms; and therefore there existed some probability of its continuance: Whereas, in the present instance, there existed no prospect of security, nor reasonable ground to hope for the continuance of peace even for one single hour: The very principles upon which the ruling powers of France acted and supported themselves, denied a wise man even the possibility of entertaining such an idea. To prove the truth of that assertion, it was only necessary to recollect the striking features which marked every change of power in France, and we should find that moderation, the friend of peace, had been the destruction of the power of the various parties which had in their turns ruled that country. What had overthrown the administration of Neckar? Moderation. What had destroyed the Constitutionalists, the Girondists, the Brissotines, and all the parties which had successively risen and sunk in that agitated hemisphere? Moderation! And what confirmed the power in the hands of the present ruling men in France? The total want of moderation! Should they ever attempt to depart from their usual system of violence, by turning their thoughts to so humane and so temperate a con-

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sideration as peace their downfall would be the inevitable consequence, in order to make room for those who, to prove themselves worthy of their new situation, would instantly violate the faith pledged by their predecessors. Hence it was evident, that, unlike all former situations, there was no security to be looked for in peace, so long as the present system continued in France: Its destruction was therefore an indispensable preliminary to the attainment of so desirable an object.

It had been asked, what probability there was of attaining that object by a continuance of hostilities? He was ready to admit that the reduction of a few towns, or the gaining a few battles, was of little or no avail towards the termination of the present war; nor had he any hesitation in saying, that the object, however desirable, was attainable only by the destruction of that system of Jacobinism which ruled Paris, and through it the whole kingdom of France: He would at the same time say, however difficult or distant the completion of such a scheme might appear, it was, in his judgment, by no means impossible or impracticable. He had, Mr. Jenkinson said, on a former night, stated his sentiments upon that subject, which were, that, in order to effect that very desirable object, it was absolutely necessary that a strong frontier should be secured, whence the united forces could press forward to the attainment of their object. And he was the more convinced of the propriety and justness of these sentiments, and of the policy of that system of proceeding, by the consideration, that should we even fail in the design of taking Paris, we should, at all events, secure a barrier, which would afford protection and security to our allies, and which, through them, must ultimately afford protection and security to ourselves.

Much had been said of the prevalence of the opinions propagated by the French. It was true that these opinions were dangerous in proportion to the power, the wealth, and population of France, to the other nations of Europe; but they were still more dangerous from their nature: The principles of Jacobinism were principles which went to set the poor against the rich, to encourage those who had nothing to lose against the best supporters of order and good government, and which, by cutting asunder every bond of human society, tended to throw every thing into chaos and confusion.

The Right Hon. Gentleman had attacked the treaty entered into with his Sardinian Majesty, and argued its inutility from the successes of the French in that quarter. That the French had gained some advantages on that side was not to be denied; but, nevertheless, the good effects of the treaty were obvious from

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from the diversions it had caused, and the number of troops the French had found it necessary to send into that quarter, which might otherwise have been so usefully and dangerously employed against the allies on the northern frontiers. The subsidy paid to the King of Prussia had also been a subject of severe reprehension: For his part, he could see nothing in that transaction that could either excite surprise from being unexpected, or reprehension from being unnecessary. It should be considered, that the Prussian monarchy was not to be ranked amongst the first-rate empires of Europe; it was a power merely artificial, and owed its existence to its treasures; if these failed, it must inevitably sink into a secondary character. Considering, therefore, that that monarch had carried on two campaigns at an immense distance from his own territories, where he could have no possibility of indemnity from the extension of territory, it was neither surprising, nor unreasonable, for him to demand that assistance which he must so much stand in need of for the prosecution of the war; and he thought that the wisdom and policy of granting him that assistance had been already fully demonstrated, and the House and the Country seemed to concur in opinion respecting it. The events of the campaign had also been forcibly urged as forming a strong ground in favour of the present motion; for his part, in the events of the present campaign, he saw nothing which was not in the highest degree encouraging, and which did not give every reasonable prospect of success. The campaign had not been fairly commenced above five or six weeks; in that short period we had taken Landrecy, a town of considerable importance, and formerly considered the key of the entrance into France; and though we had lost one or two trifling posts (Menin and Courtray), yet, when we contemplated the determined valour, spirit, and enterprise, which distinguished the whole of the allied armies, there was every reason to look forward with confidence to success and to victory.

The Right Hon. Gentleman, Mr. Jenkinson observed, had proposed a great number of Resolutions, which contained an abstract of all the various proceedings and declarations during the war, from which he had deduced two practical Resolutions; upon the first of which it was his intention to move the *previous question*; and as to the latter of them, it had no ground whatever to support it; for it wished to bind us down to a specific declaration of the form of government we intended to establish in France. It was impossible, in the nature of things, to bind men down in precise terms to objects of pursuit, because they might change from a variety of causes; and what might, or might not, be desirable one day, might be the reverse

the next. With regard to the right of interference in the internal concerns of any government, he had uniformly maintained, that one country, at peace with another, had no right whatever to interfere in its internal concerns; but he had as uniformly maintained the right of internal interference in a state of war; because he conceived it justifiable to adopt all such measures as might, by distressing our enemies, incline them to peace. It had been urged, whether, at the time we were so eager to pull down the present government of France, we were prepared to erect another in its place: He certainly was not ready to say what precise form should be substituted, because that must depend entirely upon future circumstances, after having, at all events, overturned the present power of the Jacobins, the existence of which was totally incompatible with the existence of every regular government and authority in Europe. For these several reasons he should move the *previous question* upon the Resolution moved. The question was at this time called for, and about to be put, when

Mr. Sheridan rose, and assured the House he would not detain them long. He said he perceived, from the conduct of ministers this evening, that, with them at least, "*Mum was the Order of the Day.*" The Hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, had spoken certainly in the tone of the Right Hon. minister near him (the Chancellor of the Exchequer), if not with his ability. He had a right, however, to conclude, from the silence observed by ministers, that the sentiments uttered by the Hon. Gentleman, allowing for his warmth and confidence of assertion, were in a great degree their own. The Hon. Gentleman had on the present, as on most occasions, expressed himself with a degree of confidence, which impressed his mind, as it ever had done, with an idea, that though the Hon. Gentleman was not in the cabinet, yet he certainly appeared to be so much in the secrets of ministry, that he might be properly supposed to deliver their sentiments. No other supposition, indeed, could warrant the manner in which that Hon. Gentleman delivered his opinion, unless we were to suppose that he had an hereditary knowledge of politics, and that a deep insight into the secrets of cabinets ran in his blood.

On the present occasion, he could not but think that he had passed the bounds (of the instructions he would not say, but of the intimations at least) that had been given him by the Right Hon. Gentlemen who were his supporters, and sat on each side of him (the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Mr. Secretary Dundas); for he could not conceive, however their silence might justify the supposition, that they were prepared to accompany the Hon. Gentleman in all the lengths he had

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gone that night. Not to follow him through the greater part of his arguments, few of which were of much weight, or had the smallest tendency to refute those of his Right Hon. Friend (Mr. Fox), he should confine himself to take some notice of one or two positions, which seemed to him to meet the question on a fair and manly ground. The Hon. Gentleman had openly and candidly stated, that the object of the war was the destruction of the Jacobin government of France, in order to effect which, our views must necessarily be turned to the destruction of Paris, the only probable means of effecting the end in view. Did the Hon. Gentleman, or the House, seriously suppose, that that object was so attainable as he asserted? He had relied much on the successes of the campaign, a campaign which had been commenced only a few weeks. He, however, was much afraid, that the calamities of the campaign had been much greater than the successes, and that we had gained little else than honour; and certainly honour of no inconsiderable degree had been acquired, especially by the British troops. But, on a fair review, and a balance struck, he was grieved to find, that our other advantages had been few, if any. In the same Gazette in which we were informed that Prince Kaunitz had driven the French beyond the Sambre, we had received intelligence that the enemy had penetrated into Luxembourg, and had forced General Beaulieu to retreat. After the action of the 22d, which had been represented with great triumph in our Gazette as a complete victory (he did not mean to impute any wilful misrepresentation to those accounts, but he well knew that persons who felt warmly interested in any cause, always put the best face on the position of affairs), the Emperor published a bulletin, a copy of which he held in his hand, which did not convey precisely the same idea of a complete victory as we had been led to expect. The paper he had no doubt was genuine; and though a great deal had lately been said about forgeries, he believed no imputation of that sort could be fairly laid to that paper. It purported to be a bulletin published at Tournay by the Emperor, and did great credit to the heart of that Prince, as a proof of his humanity and love of his subjects. After complimenting the officers and all his troops for their bravery in obtaining the victory of the day, it stated, that, though 6000 of the enemy were slain, yet the loss of the Austrians was upwards of 2000. The Emperor professed to be much grieved at the slaughter of his faithful subjects; and concluded with saying, that the day in which 2000 of his faithful subjects fell, could not be a day of triumph to a humane Prince. When we read such accounts, from such a quarter, of a victory, what ought to be the general

ral impression? Surely that, in the opinion of that Prince, many, many battles must be fought, many, many victories gained, before the object of the allies could be accomplished. They were told, they were not to give up the contest until we had completely overturned the present Government of France; then he would ask, at what time it was calculated that we should give it up? After having noticed, with lamentation, the irresistible fury with which the enemy constantly attacked and supported assaults, he manifested an inclination to peace with such an enemy. Much had been relied on as to the taking of Landrecie; it is true we had taken Landrecie, but it is true also that we had abandoned the defence of it, and had been obliged to fall back near 70 miles. It would be found then, upon a fair balance, that, instead of the campaign having proved successful, as had been so confidently asserted by the Hon. Gentleman, with respect to the main object of the war the reverse was the fact. Were we going to Paris? for to Paris we must, it seemed, go. We were 70 miles further from it, than at the commencement of the campaign; and for this we are to exhaust the last guinea and the last man to be spared from England; for by the reasoning made use of that night, our existence was at stake for the destruction of the system and the power of the Jacobins; and this, it was admitted, could not be accomplished without proceeding to Paris. Such was the language of a person, not indeed a cabinet minister, but one who assumed the tone of such a character, and who was supposed to speak from equal authority.—This he recollected to have been exactly the language held out on the part of the Government of this country during the American war. We were then told that our existence was at stake in the prosecution of that war; that negociation should not be resorted to, for that if we began to negotiate, we should open a field for we knew not what sort of claims, or how many of them: That if we negotiated with America, we must soon admit of its independence, and then would follow the independence, and, to this country, the total loss of Ireland; and that after such measures, the sun of Great Britain would set for ever. This had afterwards happened, and we had the pleasure to find that Great Britain had survived it.—Something of the same kind had been advanced of the power of Russia, when the minister had called on us to go to war with that country, on the question of the taking of Oczakow; and yet after this our Government had been quiet spectators of that very power taking its share of the division of the kingdom of Poland. This he mentioned to shew how much sincerity there was in all these general expressions about our very existence being at stake, and

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and to shew they were nothing but mere common-place state tricks, to cover the most wicked designs. He agreed with his Right Hon. Friend as to the conquests we had made, that they were highly honourable to the officers and men who were engaged in them; but he agreed also, that if they were to be considered as means for destroying the power of the Jacobins in Paris, they would be found to be inadequate to their proposed end, and if they were sent with that view they were all misapplied, for if our object was to destroy the power of the Jacobins at Paris, of what use were our efforts in the West Indies? Of what use were the efforts of Lord Hood in the Mediterranean, who now seemed to be beating his head against the walls of Bastia? He maintained, therefore, that the whole of our force, if our object was to destroy the power of the Jacobins, was misemployed; for by this we held out to our allies a spirit of commercial advantage, while we pretended to fight disinterestedly in the good cause of order, morality, and religion; that in short this was, as almost all the wars of Princes against the People had always been, a war of ambition against justice, to trample on the rights of the multitude for the aggrandizement of a base and sordid few: A war in which fine and splendid pretences were made use of to conceal intentions the most mean and selfish.

For a moment let Gentlemen advert to our allies. Prussia, as the Hon. Gentleman had stated, was an artificial power, depending on its treasures, which had turned out, however, to be gone, Berlin being alledged to be in a state of avowed bankruptcy; and, unfortunately for this country, the reliance of that artificial power was found to be on the treasury of Great Britain. It might be material to inquire, since so much stress had been laid on the vigour with which the troops of Prussia would co-operate, and the punctuality with which the King would act towards us, where those troops actually were, and when they would commence their co-operation? There was no doubt the British money had punctually arrived at Berlin; but though that was the case, and the troops of Prussia were to have made a junction with the British on the 24th of May, we had as yet received no intelligence of them.

With regard to the Emperor, he had much reason to fear that he also would become another artificial power, whose dependence would be on the British treasury. Already we had seen the Emperor obliged to have recourse to a loan to be negotiated in this country; and no one would say, that this was merely a temporary measure, or that a continuance of the war must not render his distress still greater. On the subject of
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that loan, there was one circumstance so singular, that he felt compelled to mention it. He held in his hand a paper which contained a letter from Mr. Boyd, the Banker, who was concerned in the transaction, requesting the Chancellor of the Exchequer to confirm, in writing, an assertion he had made in a consultation with Mr. Boyd and the German minister, respecting the loan. Here he could not but remark, that though that Right Hon. Gentleman, of all men who ever breathed, or ever spoke in a public assembly, had the finest choice of words, and the most beautiful arrangement of them, yet, in all his dealings with commercial men, he was so unfortunate as never to make himself understood. That was the case in the present instance. Mr. Boyd, who, he had no doubt, was a very accurate man, requested Mr. Pitt to state, in writing, what he had already said in the conference, that "the loan was perfectly legal, and Government wished it all possible success." That was what had been understood by Mr. Boyd and the German minister, when the former Gentleman applied to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for information, as he did not wish to do any thing illegal, or contrary to the wishes of Government. At the distance of a fortnight, during which time no doubt advice had been sent to the Imperial court of the minister's hearty concurrence, the Chancellor of the Exchequer returned for answer, "That, as far as he could recollect, there was no statute against a loan to a power at amity with this country, and that Government did not wish to obstruct such a measure." That certainty, then, of the perfect legality of the measure, turned out to be nothing more than a mere floating idea in his mind, that he recollected nothing to the contrary, and, instead of wishing it hearty success, it was only not wishing to obstruct it. Might not the Imperial minister with justice complain of deception on the part of the minister? The minister, perhaps it would be thought, ought to have wished to obstruct it, as those persons who made the loan with him, for the public service, did understand that no other loan was to be negociated, and were in consequence of that step much dissatisfied.

Mr. Sheridan ridiculed, in the most pointed terms, our treaty with the Empress of Russia; not to lay down our arms against France but by mutual consent. It would be difficult to say the Empress of Russia had laid down her arms against the French, for it would be difficult to prove that she had ever taken them up for that purpose; her motives were quite of a different nature. What was the sober reflection from all this? Why, that all the powers in this crusade were either unable or unwilling to proceed in it, and that the whole of it must eventually

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ually be supported by English treasure; and the result of our successes in the East, the West Indies, and all the parts of the globe, might be, as had been pointedly expressed on another occasion, that we should at last be in the full possession of all the islands in the world, except Great Britain.

There was one consideration which had not been touched on by his Right Hon. Friend who opened the question, which he thought deserving the attention of the House, as intimately connected with the subject; that was, the state of the country at home. He could not but consider the war as giving rise to a very dangerous system of exciting alarm among the lower orders, to irritate their passions against the supposed enemies of their country, in order to throw more power into the hands of Administration, and to keep the eyes of the Public from too nicely examining some of the late dangerous proceedings. For that purpose, fabulous plots, and reports of forged conspiracies, originating solely in the foul imagination and disordered conceptions of his Majesty's ministers, had been spread abroad. He, perhaps, might be told, that, from the Report of the Secret Committee, the House had sufficient ground to give credit to the existence of such conspiracies. He, for one, frankly avowed, that he could form no such conclusion from the facts stated in that Report; and he did not chuse so far to give up his understanding to any individuals, however respectable, as to receive the conclusions of men whom he thought deluded, and those conclusions which appeared to him not founded on any thing like proof. It might be said, that the House was to expect another Report; if that Report brought matter sufficient forward to prove any traiterous designs in any men whatever, he should be among the first to vote for their exemplary punishment, and to retract and apologize for any thing he had advanced: That, however, he did not believe would be the case.

He said, he could not help mentioning, what appeared to him contrary to the first principles of justice and honour. Many papers, of the most inflammatory sort, had been put into his hand, tending to irritate the public mind against the unfortunate men now in custody, which had been circulated through the metropolis, and over great part of the country. These he had little doubt but he could trace, if not directly to the ministers, at least to their agents, and persons in their pay.

One question he would ask, did ministers mean to give these men a fair trial? He confessed, it appeared to him very suspicious. It looked very much like an attempt to irritate the mob so far as to render it dangerous to a jury to acquit these unfortunate persons. At any rate, it was an unmanly, an un-

fair, and an unjust proceeding, thus to excite prejudices against persons whose innocence or guilt was not yet determined. He must advert also to the unfair methods which had got abroad into the world, of calumniating him, and those who with him had opposed the conduct of Administration. That he should not much rely upon, but would put a case for the House to judge, that they might determine whether or not they thought it decent to have one of their Members characters handled severely, contrary to what, he must say, was just. Suppose a great magistrate of the city, robed in the ensigns of his office, not lightly over a glass of wine, or after a good dinner, but solemnly and gravely in the court with his brother aldermen, should declare that a Member of Parliament, by name Mr. Sheridan, would be sent to the Tower within two months, provided the *Habeas Corpus* Act were suspended, and should back his assertion with a bet, and so considerable a bet as one hundred and twenty guineas to six—would they think that a light or trivial matter? and would not Gentlemen suppose that such a magistrate, from his known connexion with Administration, had some authority for saying so beyond his own ideas as a private man? It would not be orderly to name the Hon. Magistrate, but if he was in the House, he probably might be known by a gold chain which he wore. [*Here a cry of Name!*] No, there was another reason. It was, as a poet somewhere said,

“A name that sounds uncouth to British ears.”

Notwithstanding every such calumny, in defiance of any threats, and in despite of popular obloquy, he should still continue to do what he thought his duty, and would challenge any one to point out any thing in his conduct which could justly subject him to such an imputation. He concluded with giving his hearty approbation of the original motion, as, in his conception, it tended to promote the true and permanent happiness of the people of Great Britain.

The Lord Mayor of London said, he conceived it strange that this matter should be brought before the House, as he had received intimation from Mr. Sheridan's solicitors (Messrs. Wallis and Troward), that they had orders to commence an action against him for defamation. One thing only he should say, that the Hon. Gentleman had been misinformed; what he had said was in a good-humoured way, as a mere laugh of the moment, and to a friend of Mr. Sheridan. No man was less given to slander than himself; and he solemnly declared that no man detested it more. His Lordship disclaimed all knowledge of any calumnious papers against individuals; and declared,

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clared, that had the Hon. Gentleman applied to him, he would, he trusted, have given him such satisfactory information as would have rendered any complaint on the subject totally unnecessary.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, upon the present occasion it was no part of his intention to occupy much of the time of the House, which it must be deemed unnecessary for him to do, when it was considered that they were now arguing a subject which had given rise to such repeated discussion, and on which so many decisions had already taken place. The reasonings by which the affirmative of the present motion was supported, must be necessarily old in their nature, though, from the manner in which some of them had that evening been enforced, they were certainly entitled to the praise of novelty in their application. He had heard, from the highest authority in that House, that a speech was not out of order because it was a bad one; it was undoubtedly right, therefore, in the Speaker to abstain from calling Gentlemen on the other side to order; although, in point of fact, the argument of most of them, and particularly the last, might appear to have but little connexion with the subject of the war, of which the motion professed to treat, yet it might, in the mind of the Gentleman who delivered it, appear to bear some relation to the motion. On that account alone the Hon. Gentleman was secure from interruption; though it required all his ingenuity, and all his facility in combining ideas, to demonstrate, that there was any connexion between the plots and conspiracies whose existence he had been pleased to ridicule, and the question with regard to the continuance or relinquishment of the present war; in order to force that connexion, the Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sheridan) had been compelled to proceed upon an assumption, not only without the shadow of proof or probability, but without regarding the obligations of propriety, or even the appearance of decency. He had been pleased to attribute the conspiracies which had been lately discovered, to the foul imaginations of his Majesty's ministers, anxious of prolonging the delusion of the country; language, which, considering the quarter from which it came, those ministers individually might not much regard; but was most indecorous and disorderly, when applied to the Report of the Secret Committee, on whose Report the Legislature had already passed one solemn act, and from which another Report of equal importance was soon expected; and especially when the character of the Gentlemen who composed that Committee was compared with that of the person who made such reflections.

Mr. Courtenay called to order, and said, that, without making any remark on the Right Hon. Gentleman's expressions, he would only appeal to the Chair whether they were not disorderly.

The Speaker observed, that, as it was a general rule of the House, that all personal reflections were disorderly, the Hon. Member was right in his correction; though, at the same time, he conceived that an apology was due from him to the House, for not having interrupted the Hon. Gentleman (*Mr. Sheridan*) who was also guilty of a breach of order in the expressions he had made use of.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer proceeded, and declared, he owed every degree of deference to the Chair; and was perfectly disposed to make every apology to the Speaker, and to the House as a body, for any irregularity into which he might have been led. He must, however, beg leave to say, that the language of the Hon. Gentleman, whose observations he was called upon to answer, was not within the rules of Parliamentary debate, or Parliamentary decency. When interrupted, he was about to shew, that the language of the Hon. Gentleman was irregular, inasmuch as it reflected on the proceedings of a Committee, whose labours that House had made the foundation of a Bill, which had received the assent of all the branches of the Legislature. He had, therefore, argued upon his own assumed account of this transaction, in opposition not only to the imagination of ministers, but to the Report of the Committee, and to the legislative authority of the country. With regard to the papers alluded to by the Hon. Gentleman, he must declare, that he knew nothing of such papers; though he was now employed in the examination of many papers of a different complexion, from the speedy inspection of which the House would have another opportunity of judging, whether his conjectures or those of the Right Hon. Gentleman, with regard to the state of the country, were most entitled to attention.

As to the extraneous subject of the bet, alluded to by the Hon. Gentleman, he thought the reason assigned by the worthy Magistrate sufficient for that House to make no further inquiry into that subject.

There was, indeed, another view of our internal situation, which might be taken, and in which respect he was certainly somewhat obliged to the Hon. Gentleman for introducing that topic of discussion; and if, in consequence of examining the subject further, it should appear that there did exist a conspiracy in Great Britain, and that that conspiracy had been fomented and supported by the Jacobin party in France, did it not

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not follow that this was not a war in support of any precarious or fluctuating system of policy, or of any uncertain balance of power, for any commercial advantage, or any colonial or territorial aggrandizement, but for the future independence, prosperity, and peace of Great Britain, and with her of the whole European continent, which had been menaced by a tyrannical anarchy, without the destruction of which, civil society could not exist in security? That opinion the House, indeed, appeared to have pretty uniformly entertained; and it seemed somewhat singular they should be called upon to alter their former sentiments, at a period when every day was presenting them with new proofs of the justice of their apprehensions, and the propriety of the preventive measures which had been adopted. After this preliminary remark, which of itself seemed almost to be conclusive on the point before the House, it would not be requisite for him to go at much length into the various Resolutions which the Right Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Fox) had submitted to the House, and which led to two conclusions of very opposite natures, and on the propriety of each of which respectively he would say a few words, though the whole motion seemed rather calculated to put upon the Journals an abstract of the opinions entertained by Gentlemen opposite, than for any other purpose that he could discover. The Right Hon. Gentleman had specified three or four different periods of time in the progress of the French revolution; and from the varying conduct of ministers at those periods, he was desirous that the inference should follow, that their real objects have been changed, and that the war had, by those changes, from a defensive war against particular acts of aggression, been converted into a war for the purpose of subverting the existing government of the country we were engaged with. But would it be contended, that we were in no case, and under no circumstances, to extend the bounds of our security beyond the precise grounds of aggression which first occasioned a rupture? and were we in no instance, but in those in which we had been already aggrieved by the evils attendant upon the French revolution, to endeavour to prevent the further extension of principles which were sought to be propagated by the sword over every region of the globe? It was certainly somewhat singular, that the same House which had thought it right to break off all communication of a regular nature with the French republic, even in time of peace, on account of the enormities committed by its rulers, should now be called upon to renew that communication, when the same state was at open and inveterate hostility with us, and their crimes were becoming daily more atrocious.

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Recurring to the commencement of the war, the Right Hon. Gentleman had stated, that even at the time when his Majesty's forces were augmented, no intimation whatever had been given, that there was a design of interfering in the internal government of France; but so far was that assertion from being well founded, that the House would find, on turning back to his Majesty's message, subsequent to the event of the 10th of August 1792, viz. on the 28th of January 1793, and the addresses voted in answer thereto, on their Journals, that it was particularly stated, and the peculiar danger to Europe was specified to arise from inordinate ambition, coupled with principles which tended, in their propagation, to subvert all established government; and thus the general, as well as the particular, with and thirst of power, which, when acquired, was to be employed for the most pernicious ends, was stated as the danger against which we were to guard. Such had been the language held at that time, and immediately afterwards war was declared by France; and, in support of the same principles, she continued to carry it on: Nay more, when the Right Hon. Gentleman brought forward a motion similar to the present, at the close of the last session of Parliament, he had the honour of stating to the House, and even of meeting with his concurrence in that statement, that such a degree of interference, as was requisite for our own safety, was all that he wished for in regard to the interior condition of the miserable country in question. The motions of the Right Hon. Gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, went to the length of disclaiming, at all events, all interference in the internal government of a country with which we were at war; a length to which, he would venture to say, no country ever went; for interference in the internal government of a country might be one of the means of procuring peace; and the Right Hon. Gentleman should be the last man in the world to dispute this doctrine, for in the affairs of Holland some years ago, he had observed, that we should use our endeavours for the establishment of a form of government in that country the most conducive to British interests. This was correct reasoning in all cases of war, but most of all in this war, unless we were determined now to make an exception to the general principle, in favour of the French and against ourselves, by desisting, for the first time, from a practice approved by the authority of statesmen, sanctioned by the experience of ages, and conformable to the common sense of mankind. So far from the House's adopting such an opinion as that of the Right Hon. Gentleman upon this occasion, if even a contrary line of conduct was established, he was well persuaded, that,

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under such circumstances, it would be deemed more proper to break through it, than to deviate from that which we found to be to our advantage.

The Right Hon. Gentleman had next proceeded to notice our views by the declaration of Lord Hood at Toulon, and from that to the declaration of his Majesty to the People of France: Here the Right Hon. Gentleman was again mistaken, for Lord Hood pledged his Majesty's name to no form of government for France; he only offered protection to the French as far as he should be able to extend it, they pledging themselves only to a monarchical form of government; and that was followed in the month of October by a proclamation from his Majesty, proffering the same protection and assistance to all those Frenchmen who should declare in favour of hereditary monarchy; and it really must require ingenuity superior even to that of the Right Hon. Gentleman, to discover any discordance between those two transactions. The last of these acts of interference had taken place in the month of October; and at this time, when the month of June is arrived, when supplies had been granted to his Majesty, when engagements with our allies had been entered into, and the operations of the war arranged, the Right Hon. Gentleman thought it right that we should relinquish all our treaties, recede from all our plans, and adopt an entire new system, agreeable to either of the alternatives he has been pleased to point out. Gentlemen on the other side of the House had, indeed, involved themselves in perpetual inconsistencies, from the profession of their resolution to support the war, when contrasted with the opposition they had given to almost every measure which had been proposed in the course of it, till it last, on the passing of the Emigrant Corps Bill, they at once had avowed they would no longer take to themselves the credit of aiding measures which they always impugned; though it was somewhat extraordinary, that one single act should have given so much offence, when the House had voted their approbation of the general conduct of Administration. The Right Hon. Gentleman had said, that the objects of the war were impracticable; and, in order to support that position, the Right Hon. Gentleman had been pleased to assume, that it was the intention of ministers to attempt to conquer France; but they disclaimed any such design: It was not their design to conquer, but to save her; to save her from the ruin and disgrace in which she had plunged herself; to remove the shameful conquest they had made of themselves, by submitting to be governed by a lawless banditti; our object was to restore to them liberty and order, instead of anarchy and despair, and to restore France to the rank she once held

held in the number of civilized nations, and in the scale of human society. The Right Hon. Gentleman had observed, that, notwithstanding the efforts of two campaigns, the government of France was as strong as ever; and that, whether cemented by terror, or any other means, still, if it was of sufficient stability to withstand our exertions for its subjugation, it would be our wisest way to terminate the contest by negotiation. In one point of view, it was expedient to consider the principles on which that government was founded, as from the consideration of that, it would appear, whether it were not a contest against a tyranny which had abused the sacred name of freedom, to answer the purposes of its ambitious abettors, and which, by the threats of destruction, kept an unhappy people in unwilling obedience.

The Hon. Gentleman had deprecated the idea of destroying before we had prepared another edifice in lieu of that which we had pulled down; but that argument only possessed an appearance of validity, from being pushed to the very extreme of abstract politics; for he would venture to assert, without the hazard of contradiction, that no scheme of government which could be substituted in lieu of the present one of France, could be so pernicious to Great Britain and to Europe in general: And, it was not by instituting a comparison between various forms of civil policy, under all of which some regard had always been paid to the natural dictates of justice and humanity, and an anarchy which perverted rulers who were appointed for the protection of the many into instruments for the destruction of the whole, that the Hon. Gentleman can hope to succeed in convincing us of the propriety of attempting a pacification. It was said, that it would be impolitic for us to proceed any further, even supposing we should succeed in destroying the present form of government of France, unless we made up our mind as to the form of government we should wish to establish. The reverse of this appeared to be true policy, for by declaring for any particular form, we should weaken the general confederacy against the present; to destroy which, at all events, was to be done, even supposing the subsequent form should be left to the operation of chance, for any change must be for the better. The Right Hon. Gentleman said, we should aim at peace by negotiation, and at once disclaim all ideas of intermeddling with the internal government of France. Was there any security that if we should attempt to negotiate, they would listen to us in any proposal of reasonable terms? Could we suppose that the very men who were sworn enemies to our constitution, who had already declared that they would make us depose the King before they would

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would grant us peace; that men who, by their present constitution, were declared traitors to it, if they negotiated with a Sovereign—could it be supposed, he said, that men of this description would ever agree to any terms that might suit the dignity of this country to propose? And what was the reward of all his enormous sacrifice of our dignity?—the certainty of the loss of our allies, and the weakening of our own efforts, pending the negociation.

The West India islands were said to be of no advantage to us, if we meant the destruction of the present French power. With regard to the importance of those islands to this country, as constituting a proper basis of negociation, he could only say, rather let them be for ever lost to this country, than that Jacobin principles should remain unsubdued; as, on their extermination it must depend, not whether we should possess the West India islands, but the island of Great Britain itself; though he must remark, that our having obtained possession of them, would furnish ample resources to this nation in the hour of exigency; and the distress which their loss must have occasioned in France, might have a considerable tendency in awakening the infatuated people to a sense of the miseries of their condition, and the wickedness of their rulers.

Lastly, as to the propriety of our specifically declaring how far we intended to interfere in the government of that kingdom, and what particular class of its natives we meant to support, he could only say, that the extent of our interference must be limited by the events of the war; and that our espousing the cause of one particular class of Frenchmen, would only tend to prolong and embitter the dissensions which disunited them; for these reasons the Chancellor of the Exchequer said he should vote for the previous question.

Mr. Sheridan spoke both to order and in explanation. He said, no man could be more inclined to support the decision of the Chair than he was, but he conceived that he had been misunderstood. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had been convicted of being disorderly by the immediate decision of the Chair; and in making what he called an apology, had attempted to intimate, that he excepted the person to whom it was at least equally due in common with the rest of the House. The apology for being disorderly, was itself a manifest breach of order. While the Right Hon. Gentleman, however, was apologizing for his past behaviour, *Mr. Sheridan* allowed him most readily to make the distinction, for he should have received his apology with exactly the same sensations of contempt with which he had heard the provocation from him without it. He was as ready as any man to bow to the authority

thority of the Chair, but in his case the Speaker had not called *him* to order at that time. It was the right of every Member to state his own conception of order, as well as the Speaker. He had said, that the conspiracy originated in the foul imagination of his Majesty's ministers, and he must persist in saying that he felt no disposition whatever to retract one syllable of that assertion; so far from it, he would repeat his words, and his conviction, that these plots and conspiracies had originated in the foul imagination of his Majesty's ministers; and he must insist, that speaking of them as ministers, and not as individuals, or Members of that House, that language was regular and in order. Whether the sounds were as musical as the ministers would be pleased with hearing, was another question: They certainly were strictly Parliamentary; and if it was ever established otherwise, there would be an end of all plainness of speech and freedom of debate. The Right Hon. Gentleman had thought fit to say, that the Speaker would not interrupt a speech because it was bad or absurd: There again the Speaker should have called the Right Hon. Gentleman to order; for it was well known that the Speaker, in his official capacity, could not tell any Member of the House that his speech was not disorderly, but bad and absurd. The Right Hon. Gentleman had hinted that a reflection had been cast on the Committee of Secrecy, and, with a cautious magnanimity, he contrived to place himself in the centre of these twenty Gentlemen, for the purpose of applying to them all what was intended to apply to himself. That however was a gross misrepresentation, for he had made no reflection on the Committee: And he begged leave to assure the House, that no arrogant mandate of that Right Hon. Gentleman should deter him from delivering his sentiments freely. He had said that the Committee were misled; that he understood another Report was to come forth; and if that Report should contain matter to criminate individuals, he should wish to see them punished, if guilty, and he should then be ready to retract his opinion; but the Report, to produce that conviction, must be made of very different materials from the other.

With respect to the weight of character in that House, and an allusion of the Right Hon. Gentleman, that nothing which fell from certain persons could give him pain, he could only say, that when the minister, or any other man, should tax him, in or out of that House, with a single action which he feared to meet or vindicate, he would allow him, without rebuke, to deal in such insinuations, which, by the way, he had indiscriminately applied, at one time, to all who opposed his views. He left the House to judge of the manliness of a person who

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sheltered himself in the shade of his situation. He should take no further notice then of this part of the conduct of the minister: He dealt in insinuations which, but for his situation, he durst not make. On such a conduct he should offer no comment, because there were expressions of scorn and disdain which he knew the orders of the House would not permit him to use.

The Speaker explained the point of order.

Mr. Fox then proceeded to reply. He allowed to the Members of the Committee of Secrecy all possible advantage of talents: With many of them he had long been intimate, and, until lately, had agreed in political opinion: But the differences which had happened did not diminish his esteem for many of them. Although he said this much of these Gentlemen, yet he must also say, that not one of them, not one in that House, or out of it, that he knew, who, for talents and abilities, for perseverance, for political consistency, ardour for public principle and attachment to the public welfare, for every quality that was honourable to himself and useful to the public, had any superiority over his Hon. Friend (*Mr. Sheridan*), and therefore he hoped, that if Gentlemen were determined to be personal, they would understand the question in that respect. With regard to the question before the House, the minister had blended two things essentially distinct; the *medium* by which we were to carry on the war, and the *object* for which it was carried on; and here he must say, that it was not originally expressed to be the object of our Executive Government; it had never been expressed to be the object of that House; it never ought to be the object of the country, to carry on the war for the purpose of forming a government for France. Surely, if there was any distinction to be marked by words, means were one thing, the object another. The Chancellor of the Exchequer insisted that he had confounded the idea of the alteration of the government of France with the conquest of France, and that, in reality, the majority of the people of France were against the present Government: *Mr. Fox* said, he would not insult the good sense of the House by seeming to agree to that position. How stood the facts as opposed to the bare assertion of the minister? Look at the expedition of the Earl of Moira (a nobleman whom he mentioned but to honour), an expedition not planned in secret, and overturned by stratagem, but an expedition publicly announced, and for six months endeavoured to be carried into execution, by affording to this mighty majority of the French an opportunity of joining us, for the purpose of destroying a form of Government of which they were said to be so tired.

If he were, after this, to say that the great majority of the people of France were desirous of joining us to destroy their present Government, he should afterwards be ashamed to shew his face any where in Europe. The French were not now desirous of destroying their republic. Had they ever been so? What was the case at the desertion of Dumourier? He abandoned the cause of the French republic. How many followed him? A few officers and domestics. We took Valenciennes. How many repaired to our standard in consequence? We took possession of Toulon by the agreement of some of the inhabitants. We erected there a standard of royalty. How many Frenchmen came to it? A declaration was made in favour of royalty, and the French were called upon to shake off their sanguinary tyrants, and we would protect them. How many Frenchmen flocked to us for that protection? Were we not compelled to fly, and abandon the town and its inhabitants to the fury of their enemies? To all these facts the minister was to oppose a speculation of his own, to prove that the majority of the French were hostile to the present Government. No, no; whatever the French might think of their Government, they would never join the allies to alter it; they had too clear a specimen of Prussian, and Russian, and Austrian integrity, to remain doubtful of its nature; they saw by the partition of Poland, that when the allies professed to protect, their object was to plunder. It was said to be extraordinary, that Gentlemen should both oppose and support the war. He was one of those who did so; let the ridicule attach to him, if there could be any. He would do all in his power to persuade the people of this country to demand peace; but if a headstrong, rash, ignorant, or haughty minister should plunge us into a war, then we must do the best in our power to get out of it; and, to keep up our respectability to the rest of the world, supplies must be granted. He would not consent to ruin his country, because a minister had been either weak or wicked enough to involve us in a great difficulty. That was called supporting and opposing the war; nor was it new to him either in practice or in accusation: He did the same thing in the American war, after the French had joined in it. He could not consent to receive laws from the French; and he believed they would be as unwilling to receive laws from us: That was a distinction which every man could understand, who gave himself the trouble to comprehend what he heard. The Right Hon. Gentleman had said much on the impropriety of retracting any of the sentiments of the House; had that House forgotten what he said about Oczakoff, how he insisted on arming against Russia? And yet, when he found that persisting in his proposition

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situation would endanger his situation, it was found that no restriction was too strong for him, no apology too mean, nothing that he would not do to oblige the Empress of Russia: She had but to propose her terms, and he was her humble servant: The pill she offered to the minister was pretty bitter, and the manner it was administered pretty coarse, but the Right Hon. Gentleman swallowed it. Why? Because he must either do so, or be in danger of losing his place; for at that time the eyes of the people were opened to the madness of his scheme. As on that occasion there was no submission too low, so on this there is no assumption too high for him. Let but the same reason occur, and, after all his arrogance, after all his haughtiness and pride, he would most obsequiously ask pardon. As to the general argument, that the House had already divided on many points which were now brought forward, it was an answer that might be made to cover any error, however enormous; it was an answer which he had continually received during the American war, and which he as continually had despised: It was a mode of answering, however, which had cost this country above one hundred millions of money, and many, many thousands of men; it was by this sort of obstinacy in ministers, and implicit confidence in the House, that this country might be ruined. Those topics were resorted to, and that system adopted, by many of the same men in this and in that war; and the conclusion of the present might, perhaps, be more calamitous to this country than the conclusion of that war had been.

The minister had said a great deal on what was due to our dignity, and that we could not negotiate with the present rulers of France without disgracing ourselves. Had he forgotten that he himself negotiated with M. Chauvelin, the minister of these very Jacobins? and that Lord Auckland negotiated with Dumourier, the then agent of these very persons? The minister, on all occasions, dwelt much upon danger at home. The House he feared would be often called upon to attend to that subject. When the militia was called out contrary to law, insurrections were alledged as the pretext; but the minister was unable to produce a single instance of any set of individuals having gone any length that was alarming to the constitution. It had happened, however, that, as far as the war had proceeded, Jacobins had increased in number in Germany and in Italy. War, therefore, had not hitherto tended to their extermination. He should not then touch any further upon that subject, he had formed a very strong opinion upon it, and he should be ready to deliver it when proper occasion offered.

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He meant not, Mr. Fox continued, to have said any thing upon the alarm that had gone forth in this country, nor on the means made use of to increase it; whenever the day came, he should be ready also upon that point. He could not dismiss the subject for the present, however, without observing, that an alarm had been spread over this country, and a false one, for political purposes, and those the most unfair; the charge of conspiracy had been most foully exhibited against innocent persons. He knew how Mr. Walker was indicted for a conspiracy: That charge was infamously false; it was supported by nothing but the most gross and disgusting perjury; and the jury, against whom no complaint of attachment to Jacobinism was or could be exhibited, unanimously gave a verdict of Not guilty. That prosecution was forwarded by whom? He had seen hand-bills upon that and similar subjects; he would not say they were propagated by ministers, but he knew it to be by men not unconnected with ministers: The same trouble had been taken, and by the same men, in this, as in the running down of Paine's book: That he considered as a strong circumstance of suspicion, as to who were the parties in these foul deeds, and what were the views to be answered by them. The minister talked of suspicious persons: He begged leave to lay himself open to the suspicion arising from what he had just said. No man who thought of him with common candour and fairness, would think that he had wishes hostile to the constitution of this country: Honest men would think well of him; from men of another description, he knew he should meet with misrepresentation and slander. It was a misfortune he must submit to; he, therefore, in spite of popular clamour, would declare it to be his opinion, because it was his opinion, that there was that day great cause for alarm in this country; but the danger was not to be apprehended from low and inconsiderable persons, who had read Paine's book, and who, perhaps, might not understand it, but from those who made the weak, instruments in the hands of the wicked, whose purpose was that of destroying the fairest, the most beautiful, the most ornamental, and at the same time the soundest and best part of the constitution of England, and substituting the will of the executive authority, for which purpose it became necessary to suspend the authority of our best laws, which were framed for the safety of the subject. That there was in this country, at this day, a party who thought the present a good opportunity to try to effect their purpose, and to defeat all the principles of Government that were popular at the accession of the House of Brunswick, who wished to establish in this country the despotism of some of the worst governments

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vernments of the continent, by which all the freedom of the constitution of this country, and the blessings we had enjoyed under it, were to be done away for ever: He knew there was such a party in this country; they were active, and not without hopes of success; but it was his duty to tell that to the Public, that they might see their danger, know from whence it came, and prevent it if they pleased. That was the same party that was triumphant all the reign of Charles the First: They had had many appellations. By some they had been called Jacobites, by some High Churchmen, by some Tories. He knew them to be enemies to the true spirit of the constitution of this country: That ought to excite the alarm of the people. He had done his duty in telling the Public so, for which he was sure he should receive the approbation of his conscience to the last moment of his life.

The House then divided; when there appeared,

<i>For the Previous Question</i>	208
<i>Against it</i>	55

Majority 153

Adjourned.

List of the Minority who voted for Mr. Fox's Resolutions.

Anson, Thomas	Milner, Sir W.
Aubrey, Sir John	Milbanke, Ralph
Antonie, Lee	Milnes, R. S.
Baring, Sir Francis	North, Dudley
Bouverie, Edward	Pierse, Henry
Burch, J. R.	Plumer, William
Byng, George	Powlett, Powlett
Clayton, Sir Robert	Rawdon, Hon. John
Courtenay, John	Russell, Lord William
Church, J. B.	Sheridan, R. B.
Crewe, John	Shaw, Conliffe
Curwen, J. C.	Smith, William
Erskine, Hon. Thos.	Spencer, Lord Robert
Featherstone, Sir Henry	St. John, St. Andrew
Fitzpatrick, General	Sturt, Charles
Fletcher, Sir H.	Taylor, M. A.
Fox, C. J.	Tarleton, Colonel
Francis, Philip	Thompson, Thomas
Harrison, John	Townshend, Lord John
Harcourt, John	Vyner, Robert
Honeywood, Filmer	Walwyn, James
Howard, Henry	Weston, C. C.
Hussey, William	Whitbread, Sam. Junr.
Jekyll, Joseph	Whitmore, John
Jervoise, C. J.	Winnington, Sir Ed.
Ludlow, Earl	Wilbraham, R.
Long, Samuel	Wharton, John
Mantland, Hon. T.	

TELLERS.

Lambton, W. Henry Grey, Charles

HOUSE

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY, June 2.

GIBSON AND JOHNSON'S BILLS OF EXCHANGE.

The Judges delivered their opinion *seriatim*. There were six for reverting the decree of the courts below, and six for affirming. The casting vote lay with the Chancellor, and he decided for affirming the decree. This business, which has so long occupied all the learning of the law courts, is therefore at last finally decided. Lord Kenyon and Lord Thurlow were of different opinions: The former was for affirming, the latter against it.

Several Bills were brought from the Commons, and read.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, June 2.

Lord John Cavendish and Lord Malden took the oaths and their seats; the first for Derbyshire, and the last for the county of Hereford.

Message from the Lords, that they had agreed to several Bills sent them by the Commons, without any amendment.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, June 3.

STATUTE LABOUR BILL.

On the Bill being read a third time,

Earl Stanhope objected to the power which it gave to justices of the peace; which power he called an arbitrary one, inasmuch as it allowed the magistrate to shew that lenity to one man, which he might deny to another; and therefore he should move an amendment to alter that part of the Bill.

A short conversation ensued, in which the truth of that assertion of Earl Stanhope was denied by Earl Spencer, Lord Auckland, and the Lord Chancellor.

Earl Stanhope, notwithstanding, insisted on his motion being put, which, with several other amendments by the same Noble Lord, were all negatived without a division, and the Bill passed, and was ordered to the Commons.—Adjourned.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, June 3.

The House took into consideration the amendments made by the Lords to the Bristol Church Bill, and the same being read, were agreed to.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THURSDAY, June 5.

The Duke of Clarence presented a petition from the West India Merchants, praying to be heard by counsel against a clause in the Slave Carrying Bill; which was agreed to; and counsel were called in and heard against the said clause in the Committee. A long conversation then ensued between the Lord Chancellor, the Duke of Clarence, the Earl of Mansfield, Lord Auckland, and the Bishop of Rochester, and an amendment was agreed to, purporting, that in cases of aggression of the masters of the ships, their owners should not be entitled to recover their insurance if loss ensued.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, June 5.

Received a Message from the Lords, that they would proceed further in the Trial of Warren Hastings, Esq. on Saturday the 7th.

After which, as there were but 14 Members present, they necessarily separated.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, June 6.

FRENCH PROPERTY BILL.

The French Property Bill was read a third time, and passed.

Earl Hardwicke presented a petition from Mr. Hastings to the Lords, of which the following is a copy:

"That it is with the greatest reluctance and concern that your Petitioner feels himself obliged once more to address your Lordships on the subject of this long-depending trial.

"Your Petitioner begs leave to lay before your Lordships, his well-founded apprehensions, excited by the manner in which the general reply on the part of the Managers is now

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evidently conducted, that such reply is meant to be extended beyond the probable limits of the present sessions of Parliament.

"Your Petitioner hopes he may be allowed to bring to your Lordships' recollection, that the reply was at the instance of the Managers adjourned over from the last year, under the assurance of an accelerated and early termination of it, and that the whole of the present sessions, except a small interruption occasioned by the examination of the Marquis Cornwallis, has been employed by the Hon. Managers. Notwithstanding that, your Petitioner has, for the purpose of dispatch, in addition to the sacrifices made for a similar purpose in the last year, waved his right to observe by his counsel on the new evidence adduced in reply.

"Your Petitioner begs leave again to suggest to your Lordships the unexampled duration of his trial, the indefinite period to which it may be still further protracted, and the extreme vexation and injury to which he would be subjected, if the intention on the part of his prosecutors should be suffered to have effect.

"He implores, therefore, of your Lordships' humanity and justice, that such measures may be adopted on the part of your Lordships, as may assure to your Petitioner the speedy termination of this painful and unparalleled proceeding; and further, if need should be, that your Lordships will graciously condescend, in such manner as to the wisdom and dignity of your Lordships may seem meet, to become suitors to his Majesty's goodness in his behalf, that the present sessions of Parliament may be permitted to continue till the reply on the part of the Hon. Managers for the House of Commons shall be fully and finally closed.

Westminster-hall, (Signed) WARREN HASTINGS.
5th June 1794.
Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, June 6.

REPORT OF THE SECRET COMMITTEE.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer presented the second part of the Report of the Secret Committee*. It was then moved, and agreed to, "That the Report be received; that it do lie on the table; that copies thereof be printed; and that it be taken into consideration on Friday the 13th.—Adjourned.

* For the printed copy of this Second Report, see the Appendix to this volume, p. 33.

HOUSE

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HOUSE OF LORDS.

SATURDAY, June 7.

Lord Privy Seal (the Marquis of Stafford) brought up the Second Report of the Committee of Secrecy *. The title being read, the *Marquis of Stafford* moved that the Report be printed. Carried *nem. con.*

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

SATURDAY, June 7.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer brought up the Appendix to the Report of the Committee of Secrecy, which was ordered to be printed.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer then moved, that the Report be taken into consideration on Friday the 13th.

Agreed to the Lords' amendments in the Highways Statute Labour Bill.

Rucker's Naturalization Bill was brought from the Lords, and read a first time.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, June 11.

The Royal Assent was given by commission to a number of public and private Bills; among the former was the Bill for the Relief of Insolvent Debtors. The commissioners were the *Lord Chancellor*, *Marquis of Stafford*, and *Archbishop of Canterbury*.

Lord Grenville gave notice that he should, on Friday the 13th, move a vote of thanks to Earl Howe, for his late glorious victory† over the French. His Lordship also said, that the

* See the Appendix to this volume, p. 201.

† As the engagement which ended in this victory was one of the most close-fought and bloody actions, the most brilliant and splendid in its conduct and consequences to the Commander in Chief, the officers, and seamen, as well as the most essential in point of advantage to the country, that ever dignified the page of our naval history, we think it necessary to subjoin Lord Howe's first account of it, as communicated to the Public in the LONDON GAZETTE EXTRAORDINARY of June 10th, 1794:

" SIR,

" Thinking it may not be necessary to make a more particular report of my proceedings with the fleet, for the present information of the Lords Com-

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missioners

the Second Report of the Secret Committee should be taken into consideration on the same day.

The

missioners of the Admiralty, I confine my communications chiefly, in this dispatch, to the occurrences when in presence of the enemy yesterday.

" Finding, on my return off Brest on the 19th past, that the French fleet had, a few days before, put to sea; and receiving, on the same evening, advices from Rear-Admiral Montague, I deemed it requisite to endeavour to form a junction with the Rear-Admiral as soon as possible, and proceeded immediately for the station on which he meant to wait for the return of the *Venus*.

" But, having gained very credible intelligence, on the 21st of the same month, whereby I had reason to suppose the French fleet was then but a few leagues farther to the westward, the course before steered was altered accordingly.

" On the morning of the 28th the enemy were discovered far to windward, and partial actions were engaged with them that evening and the next day.

" The weather-gage having been obtained, in the progress of the first-mentioned day, and the fleet being in a situation for bringing the enemy to close action the 1st instant, the ships bore up together for that purpose, between seven and eight o'clock in the morning.

" The French, their force consisting of twenty-six ships of the line, opposed to his Majesty's fleet of twenty five (the *Audacious* having parted company with the sternmost ship of the enemy's line, captured in the night of the 28th) waited for the action, and sustained the attack with their customary resolution.

" In less than an hour after the close action commenced in the centre, the French Admiral, engaged by the *Queen Charlotte*, crowded off, and was followed by most of the ships of his van in condition to carry sail after him, leaving with us about ten or twelve of his crippled or totally dismasted ships, exclusive of one sunk in the engagement. The *Queen Charlotte* had then lost her fore topmast, and the main topmast fell over the side very soon after.

" The greater number of the other ships of the British fleet were, at this time, so much disabled or widely separated, and under such circumstances with respect to those ships of the enemy in a state for action, and with which the firing was still continued, that two or three even of their dismantled ships, attempting to get away under a spritsail singly, or smaller sail raised on the stump of the foremast, could not be detained.

" Seven remained in our possession, one of which, however, sunk before the adequate assistance could be given to her crew; but many were saved.

" The *Brunswick*, having lost her mizen mast in the action, and drifted to leeward of the French retreating ships, was obliged to put away large to the northward of them. Not seeing her chased by the enemy, in that predicament, I flatter myself she may arrive in safety at Plymouth. All the other twenty-four ships of his Majesty's fleet re-assembled later in the day; and I am preparing to return with them, as soon as the captured ships of the enemy are secured, for Spithead.

" The material injury to his Majesty's ships, I understand, is confined principally to their masts and yards, which I conclude will be speedily replaced.

" I have not been yet able to collect regular accounts of the killed and wounded in the different ships. Captain Montague is the only officer of his rank who fell in the action. The numbers of both descriptions, I hope, will

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The Earl of Lauderdale said, as there might probably arise a debate on both those subjects, he should advise the Noble Lord to appoint separate days for the discussion of each.

Lord Grenville could not conceive how it was possible for any Noble Lord to have an objection to thank our naval commander, and his gallant officers, for their most splendid victory over the enemy, or what species of argument could call such a proposition into debate; and, as he could have no idea of a dissent to what he should propose, he should not follow the Noble Earl's advice.

The Earl of Lauderdale said, he wished the House would not separate with a wrong impression of what he had said; it was very

will prove small, the nature of the service considered; but I have the concern of being to add, on the same subject, that Admiral Graves has received a wound in the arm, and that Rear-Admirals Bowyer and Pasley, and Captain Hutt, of the *Queen*, have each had a leg taken off; they are, however (I have the satisfaction to hear), in a favourable state under those misfortunes. In the captured ships the numbers of killed and wounded appear to be very considerable.

" Though I shall have, on the subject of these different actions with the enemy, distinguished examples hereafter to report, I presume the determined bravery of the several ranks of officers and the ships' companies employed under my authority, will have been already sufficiently denoted by the effect of their spirited exertions; and, I trust, I shall be excused for postponing the more detailed narrative of the other transactions of the fleet thereon, for being communicated at a future opportunity; more especially as my first Captain, Sir Roger Curtis, who is charged with this dispatch, will be able to give the farther information the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty may at this time require. It is incumbent on me, nevertheless, now to add, that I am greatly indebted to him for his councils as well as conduct in every branch of my official duties: And I have similar assistance, in the late occurrences, to acknowledge of my second Captain, Sir Andrew Douglas.

I am, with great consideration,

SIR,

Your most obedient servant,

HOWE.

P. S. The names and force of the captured French ships with the fleet is transmitted herewith.

List of French ships captured on the 1st day of June 1794.

La Juste	-	-	-	-	-	80	guns.
Sans Pareille	-	-	-	-	-	80	
L'America	-	-	-	-	-	74	
L'Achille	-	-	-	-	-	74	
Northumberland	-	-	-	-	-	74	
L'Impetueux	-	-	-	-	-	74	
Vengeur	-	-	-	-	-	74	guns almost
immediately upon being taken possession of.							

N. B. The ship stated to have been captured on the evening of the 28th of last month, is said by the prisoners to be the *Revolutionnaire*, of 120 guns.

far

far from his intention, and he believed from the intention of every Member of the House, to make any opposition to the vote of thanks to Earl Howe, &c.; it was undoubtedly well merited, and would arise from the gratitude every man of this country must be impressed with for their great services; but it was equally necessary to expect, that some Members of the House might take that opportunity to comment on the events of the war, which might possibly bring on a debate, on which account he wished a day might be appointed for that purpose alone.

Lord Grenville replied, that the vote of thanks was not connected with the merits of the war.

The Lord Chancellor put the question to adjourn.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, *June 11.*

The consideration of the Report of the Secret Committee was deferred, on the motion of *the Chancellor of the Exchequer*, to Monday the 16th.

Mr. Secretary Dundas gave notice, that on the first full day, which would probably be Monday the 16th, he should move the thanks of the House to those gallant officers and men whose courage and abilities had contributed to the late success of his Majesty's arms at sea.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THURSDAY, *June 12.*

This day the Lords went in the usual state to Westminster-hall, to proceed in the trial of Warren Hastings, Esq. and when returned from the Hall, a message was sent to the House of Commons, acquainting them, that this House would further proceed in the said trial on Saturday the 14th.

There being no other business before the House, they adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, *June 12.*

LONDON MILITIA.

Sir Watkin Lewes gave notice, that on the first open day, he would move for leave to bring in a Bill, appointing certain regulations for the London Militia.

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There being but five or six Members present, they necessarily separated.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, June 13.

EARL HOWE.

Lord Grenville rose, he said, in consequence of the notice which he had the honour of giving their Lordships on Wednesday, of his intention of moving the thanks of their Lordships to Earl Howe, and all the officers and men engaged in the action in which the late signal victory over the French fleet was gained. This was a subject upon which he was sure such perfect unanimity must prevail, that any attempt on his part to expatiate upon the circumstances attending the late glorious victory obtained by his Majesty's fleet under the command of that able and gallant Admiral would be perfectly unnecessary. It would, indeed, be injustice in him to attempt to describe the merits of a victory, the most brilliant in manner, and the most important in effect, of any victory recorded to have been obtained in the history of naval engagements. Exclusive of that determined courage which has always characterised the English seamen, there was a degree of skill and science displayed by the Noble Lord that never was exceeded upon any former occasion. Thus much his feelings had prompted him to say; and he need not speak or describe the feelings, the joy, and the satisfaction of the Public, on the occasion; they were evident and undeniable throughout the metropolis, and he had no doubt that they would be manifested with equal ardour throughout the British dominions, as soon as the news should be generally known. He would, therefore, not detain their Lordships any longer, but would move,

"That the thanks of the House be given to Admiral Earl Howe, for the important services rendered to his country by his able and gallant conduct in the victory obtained by the fleet under his command, over the French fleet, on the 1st of June 1794:

"That the thanks of the House be given to Rear Admirals Hood, Graves, Cornwall, Pasley, Bowyer, and Sir R. Curtis, and to all the captains and officers of the fleet, for their brave and gallant behaviour during that engagement:

"That the House does highly approve of the conduct of the seamen, soldiers, and marines, on board the fleet; and that the officers of their respective ships do communicate the same to them: And,

"That

"That the Lord Chancellor do communicate the thanks of the House to Earl Howe."

Lord Grenville said, that, with respect to this last motion, he wished to observe, that it certainly would be more gratifying to the House to have an opportunity of declaring their sentiments to the Noble Admiral personally in his place, but the present situation of affairs would render his absence from the fleet extremely inconvenient; and therefore he thought it would be better to have the thanks of the House transmitted by the Lord Chancellor.

The Duke of Grafton said, he knew that the orders of the House did not require that any motion should be seconded; if they did, he should have been zealous to have the honour of standing forward upon this occasion. He could not, however, avoid saying a few words upon the subject. He had the honour of having lived in habits of the greatest intimacy and friendship with the Noble Admiral for a period of above thirty-five years; and during that whole time, he never had entertained but one opinion of him, which was, that, exclusive of his valuable qualities as a man, he was most eminently distinguished for consummate bravery and skill as an officer, sound judgment and policy as a statesman, and the greatest professional knowledge and ability as a seaman. If he were to attempt, upon this occasion, to call to the recollection of the House the various important services performed by the Noble Lord for his country, his want of abilities to describe them might perhaps take from the lustre which belonged to them; he knew he was unequal to the task of tracing the facts that constituted the fame of that gallant Admiral: He could not, however, avoid just attempting to bring to the recollection of their Lordships a few of the many glorious exploits performed by the Noble Earl, which must for ever insure to him the gratitude of his country. The skill and bravery displayed by him in the war before the last, and the manner in which, when a Captain, he brought up the *Magnanime*, which he then commanded, close to a fort on the Isle of Rhé (which had previously greatly damaged our fleet), and silenced it, was an act which, at that time, excited the admiration of the fleet itself, and of the whole kingdom. When afterwards he acted, together with the late Admiral Keppel, as a second under the celebrated Lord Hawke, in the engagement on the coast of France with Monsieur de Conflans, he conducted himself in such a manner as to receive from Lord Hawke the most distinguished marks of approbation; that Noble Lord, in his letter home, spoke in the most handsome terms of his seconds, and the support they afforded him. Passing over a variety of other important services, he should

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come to the period when Lord Howe had a command in America last war; and here he would venture to say, that if his conduct on that service was tried by the tests of truth and candour, the result would be highly to his honour. He came next to a circumstance, which excited the astonishment and admiration of all Europe, and was alone sufficient to rank him among the first seamen this country ever produced; he meant the relief of Gibraltar, in the face of a much superior fleet, viz. the combined fleets of France and Spain, which were at that time more in number by one third than his own. The impression that splendid action had made on the great Frederick, the late King of Prussia, was a memorable circumstance; as that wise man and valiant hero paid his tribute of approbation to Lord Howe, in a letter which he sent to him through the medium of his minister at this court. If any more was necessary to establish the character of this gallant Admiral, it only remained to mention his late victory, most glorious to the character of the country, most advantageous to the interests of the nation, and most honourable to himself; since, through that splendid victory, the naval superiority of England was clearly ascertained.

His Grace said, he was sure there was not one Noble Lord in that House, nay more, that there was not one true Briton who did not feel the utmost gratitude to the Noble Lord for his important services; and if it could be said of any man, it might be said of him, "He may read his history in a nation's eyes."

The Duke of Bedford said, he concurred with the Noble Duke in all he had stated to their Lordships, and he congratulated the Noble Earl who was the immediate and the leading object of the motion before the House; he congratulated their Lordships; he congratulated the nation at large, on the great, the glorious victory we had lately gained. The skill of Lord Howe was unrivalled; and his late splendid services exceeded the most sanguine expectation. He trusted that this event would prove a fortunate event to the French themselves, and to all Europe. He was happy to find that we preserved our superiority at sea, and hoped it would convince France, how absurd that opinion they had entertained was, that this country could be conquered. He trusted it had taught their Lordships too not to think of sending English troops to Flanders, for there was an end now of all idea of danger to this country from the French. In short, he was confident that this event might be the happy means of accelerating peace; as, he flattered himself, there was still reason enough in the minds of those who at present governed France to be glad to make peace if we would give it to them.

Lord Viscount Sydney agreed in every thing that had been said to the honour of the character of the Noble Earl, the subject of the present motion. He rejoiced as much as any man at this great and important victory, for the same reason that had been stated by the Noble Duke (Bedford), viz. he thought it would answer the purpose to which victory ought always to be applied—the acceleration of peace. No means were so likely to produce and accelerate that desirable object as beating the French. Indeed it was the only means of effecting it. He agreed with the Noble Duke who had spoken first, that Lord Howe's life had been a continued series of great and gallant actions; but great and glorious as the late victory was, he must consider the relief of Gibraltar, in the face of a superior force, as the most glorious of any the Noble Earl had achieved. He had, his Lordship said, been the man to whom the Prussian minister first mentioned or communicated the feelings of the King, his master, on that occasion; and stated the degree of gratitude that Monarch felt to be due to the Noble Admiral. His Lordship said, it was not in his power sufficiently to extol, or even do justice to the merit of the Noble Earl, so deservedly an ornament to that House, and an honour to his country.

The Earl of Lauderdale said, that he felt himself bound to say a few words, to prevent any misconception of what had fallen from him when the Noble Secretary of State gave notice of this motion. He believed it was understood by ministers that the motion would be opposed, but there was not a man in the country, he was sure, who did not sincerely rejoice at so glorious an event, as the late victory at sea. The conduct of the Noble Lord who was the subject of the present motion, had been such as to render it impossible for an idea of that kind to enter into the contemplation of any individual in that House, or in the kingdom. So far from opposing, he wished to be among the foremost in congratulating the country, in congratulating the Noble Admiral, upon the glorious event. Whether, considering the service upon which Lord Howe was sent, and the immense importance it was of to this country, an adequate and sufficient force had been allowed him, was a point which he would not then discuss; even if the force were insufficient, however blame might attach elsewhere, it must tend to increase the glory obtained by the Noble Lord. He entertained the same sentiments as the Noble Duke had delivered upon this occasion; he was perfectly ready to thank the Noble Earl, and all the officers and men, by whose exertions this great and glorious victory had been gained. He subscribed entirely to the vote of thanks; but he begged to be understood

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understood as expressing a hope that good use would be made of the victory we had gained, which was that of procuring peace. He maintained, that the idea of conquering France, for the purpose of establishing a form of government, was not then more rational than it had been at any other period, and we ought to take leave of it for ever. The people of this country had never had any such extravagant desires; they wished to see our superiority kept up at sea; but as to any conquests of ours over the French by land, they affected the people but slightly. Nothing could demonstrate this more clearly, than the different feeling of the Public manifested on the surrender of Valenciennes, or the seizure of Toulon; but when the news of the victory of our grand fleet arrived, every heart beat with rapture, and every countenance sparkled with joy; this was a clear proof, that the Public felt our strength was well employed, when employed at sea, and not so when exerted on the continent. He was confident they all felt that this country was entirely out of danger, therefore an attempt at conquering France would be unnecessary and foolish, even admitting it to be possible. For those reasons he hoped, that while we were thanking brave men as they justly merited, such uses would be made of the victory they had gained, as would be of benefit and advantage to this country at large.

The Duke of Clarence said, that, after so many Noble Lords had stated their sentiments upon this subject, he must join in the general joy on the occasion. He believed every Englishman did the same; a strong proof, that, let men differ as they might on political questions, all parties were unanimous in applauding gallant victories at sea: The House would, therefore, forgive him if he trespassed a few moments upon their attention. By the late glorious victory obtained by Lord Howe, the superiority of the English was established, and he hoped would remain so for ever. He could not avoid observing, that in the two last wars, as well as upon the present occasion, when the fleets of England and France met upon equal terms, the superior skill and steadiness of the English were always manifested: This assertion was proved by three great naval victories: The first in the war before the last, when Lord Hawke gained so glorious a victory over M. de Conflans; the second in the last war, when Lord Rodney, on the memorable 12th of April, so completely defeated the French in the West Indies; and the third was the instance which they were then celebrating. He considered this action as one of the greatest which the annals of this country could boast of; the circumstances of it, and the conduct, bravery,

and skill, manifested by Lord Howe during the action, did him the highest honour; the gallantry of his officers and seamen, also, deserved every possible praise; he congratulated the country at large on it most sincerely; it proved that still this country had as great superiority as ever at sea, and that this country was not to be conquered by France. Whatever apprehensions of an invasion, therefore, might have been entertained, all ideas of an invasion must now be at an end. He concluded by saying, that he would not at present make any observation on what had been said by a Noble Earl, respecting the internal government of a neighbouring country, but he conceived that moderation and reason were the best modes of governing France.

The question was put on the motions of Lord Grenville, which were carried *nem. dissentiente*.

SECOND REPORT OF THE SECRET COMMITTEE.

The Order of the Day, for the reading the Second Report of the Secret Committee, being read,

Lord Grenville said, he did not think it necessary that the whole of the Report should be read to their Lordships, because he was sure that every Noble Lord had read it over with that attention which a subject of such magnitude and importance required. He hoped, that, having read it, he should find but one opinion in the House with respect to the measure which he should feel it his duty to propose. It would not be necessary for him to occupy much of their Lordships' time in submitting his reasons for proposing, at this juncture, to carry an address to the foot of the Throne, to assure his Majesty of their steady and loyal support, because the Report itself contained the strongest arguments that could possibly be offered upon the subject. Their Lordships would perceive, by the tenor of the Report, that the conclusions drawn in the former Report were confirmed and established. It could surely be no longer contended, that there did not exist in this country a conspiracy, the object of which was, under the specious name of a reform, to subvert its government, laws, and religion. Fortunately the conspiracy was discovered in time, their plans developed, and their intentions frustrated. This conspiracy was the more dangerous, because it was not the effusion of temporary discontent; it was not the unpremeditated fury of a thoughtless mob; it was a cool, deliberate, systematic plan to destroy the constitution of England, and to substitute in its place the tyranny of France. From a perusal of the Report, it would appear that this plan had been carrying on by persons in this country, in conjunction with others abroad, for more than

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two years; and they thought they had brought it to a state nearly ready to be carried into execution, when the whole was happily discovered. Their Lordships would find, that, soon after the destruction of the monarchy in France, a system of correspondence was established between certain clubs in this country and the new government in that. In November 1792, formal addresses were sent from certain Societies here to the Convention of France, and regular answers received. These Societies, covering their real designs under the specious pretext of a reform in Parliament, took upon themselves to declare to the French government, that the people of England were anxious to shake off the yoke which oppressed them, and to adopt the new system of liberty; they told them, that, however they might be kept from declaring their sentiments, the majority of the English were against the Government. These assemblies had been acted upon by certain artful persons, and they were consequently assiduous in their endeavours to disseminate the forms and principles which have been adopted in France, the avowed enemy not only of this country, but of all order, law, liberty, and justice. They had, by their writings and exertions, done every thing in their power to create a partiality for French phrases among the people, and for French doctrines and principles. They had formed a plan to carry into effect the conquest of this country by France: Not by her armies; not by her fleets; but by creating an internal commotion in this kingdom. The artifices used, and the seditious publications which had been industriously distributed, by those Societies, were noticed in the first Report, and stood confirmed by the second Report, submitted to the perusal of their Lordships. He would not, he said, pay so ill a compliment to the loyalty of the people, as to state, that the numbers of those associations were *not* small; they were, it was true, few in number; but they expected to accomplish, by coalescence, zeal, artifice, and activity, what they could not hope to attain by the power of numbers. In 1793, they artfully disseminated a quantity of seditious papers; in which they expressly approved of the conduct of those who had been convicted and punished for illegally assembling in Scotland under the name of the British Convention. They had even dared, in their writings, to question the authority and the sentence of the Criminal Judicature of Scotland. And it appeared, by the Report on their Lordships' table, that they had formed Committees of Secrecy and Emergency; and followed up their plans with increased activity, since the conviction of those persons to whom he had adverted. It appeared, that there

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was a systematic plan to go on, step by step, to enforce similar proceedings, and the British Convention was to have met next October.

Their Lordships would perceive, that the Committee had particularly described that Society, which, by way of eminence, was called the London Corresponding Society. This Society seemed to have been formed of, or at least to have been conducted by, persons in a higher sphere of life, and of more cultivated talents, than most of the other Societies. It was through the medium of this Society that a correspondence was kept up between the other Societies in different parts of the kingdom, and those infamous and destructive principles circulated, which tend to the destruction of all regular government. Although the war between his Majesty and France interrupted the direct correspondence which before existed between the Societies here and those in France, it did not prevent the former from continuing to feel a strong interest in the cause of the French, nor from endeavouring, as much as they could, to justify every one of their measures, however hostile to this country. Having disseminated their pernicious principles to a considerable degree, and drawn many unthinking persons to join them, it became necessary to bring their principles into action, in order the better to enable them to reap the fruits of their labours. For this purpose they mentioned the propriety, and even necessity, of adopting the example of France, and calling a General Convention, for the redress of grievances, and the reformation of abuses. In pursuance of this plan, that meeting, which took the title of the British Convention, assembled at Edinburgh in October 1793. His Lordship said, it would be altogether unnecessary for him to trace the whole of the proceedings of this pretended Convention. They were not satisfied with adopting the destructive principles which have plunged France into desolation and ruin, but they followed, as far as they could, the manner, and used the language, of the French Convention. All the eloquence and talents of the members of this Convention could never have enabled them to carry into effect their infamous designs; something more effectual was wanting, and that was *arms*. Their Lordships would see traced out in the Report, the means adopted for the procuring of arms, and the *nature* of those arms. Proofs unanswerable would there be found, that arms of an extraordinary kind were in preparation. Indeed, considerable quantities of them were prepared, and would probably soon have been brought into use, if it had not been for the providential discovery made of their designs, and the measures taken to prevent them. His Lordship wished to

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remark to the House, the deliberate and determined system with which these persons pursued their infamous project. It would be natural to suppose, that when some of the members of the Convention were taken up and punished with transportation, when they knew they had offended against the laws of their country, they would have been deterred by the examples, and have renounced such seditious intentions; but the reverse was the case; they did not abandon the object of their Convention, but continued it in the face of a trial, conviction, condemnation, and punishment! When the Convention was dispersed, their Committee of Emergency immediately began to sit, and to communicate with all the Societies established in different parts of the kingdom. He made this observation to shew, that the danger ought not to be treated as light, nor the conspirators with contempt, because it appeared, that what they wanted in numbers and importance, they made up by perseverance and boldness.

Under all these circumstances, he hoped to find but one opinion among their Lordships. He was sure every one of them would stand forward in defence of the constitution of this country; and he was convinced, that, having perused the Report, there could be no doubt entertained of the existence of the conspiracy. He therefore hoped, that the address which he meant to propose, would meet with the universal approbation of the House.

His Lordship concluded by moving, " That an humble address be presented to his Majesty from the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled, informing his Majesty, that they have taken into consideration his most gracious communication, relative to certain papers and transactions, militating against the public safety, and that they conceived it their bounden duty to lay before his Majesty their sentiments, that they have seen with concern a traitorous and seditious conspiracy against the authority of Parliament, and against their happy and glorious constitution, And that they have beheld systematic plans, and wicked and detestable designs, leading to all the horrors of anarchy, with a firm conviction that they were avowed, and on the point of being executed.

" That their Lordships felt their gratitude for his Majesty's paternal care to bring to exemplary punishment the authors and abettors of all such plans as are repugnant to the existing Government, and that they wish to vest additional powers in the Executive Government, to provide for the public tranquillity, relying on his Majesty for the suppression legally of such crimes; and that they were ready to

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"give energy and vigour to that law by which they are protected, and by which they enjoy their liberties, and the preservation of good order."

If this address should meet the concurrence of their Lordships, Lord Grenville said, he should propose, that it be sent to the Commons for their approbation, in order that it should be presented to his Majesty as the joint address of the two Houses of Parliament.

The Earl of Abingdon said, "Your Lordships' Report from the Secret Committee having referred to projects of the most desperate and flagitious nature, respecting the members of both Houses of Parliament, I have, as a specimen of this, in my hand, a letter addressed to me from the town of Glasgow, inclosing a speech of a Noble Lord of this House, which was printed, and in many thousands, as it is said, circulated there. The speech is intitled, "A Copy of that most extraordinary Speech, delivered in the House of Lords by the Right Hon. the Earl Stanhope, on Thursday the 23d of January 1794, for the restoration of *Peace*, and acknowledging the French Republic." And the letter is as follows: "This most excellent speech has been reprinted at Glasgow; many thousands of it are now in circulation. Your "*horse-laugh*" is marked, and will be properly attended to." Your Lordships may remember, that when this speech was made, I said that the best argument in answer to it was, "*a good loud horse-laugh*." It is for this answer then, that I am, thank God! a marked man; for who of your Lordships, calling himself an *Englishman*, that would not be proud of such a mark? but I mention this now, not in address to those of your Lordships who have any respect for your own honour and dignity, but in admonition to those *Sans-Culottes* Lords of this House, who, in carrying on their intrigues, and forming their parties *within* these walls, are as forgetful of themselves as they are dead to the mischief which they are so *responsibly* the occasion of *without* these walls. And this, my Lords, I say in *concern*, as well as in *admonition*."

Lord Lauderdale observed, that the address supposed no ground of complaint against his Majesty's ministers, though it had been accurately stated to their Lordships, that they had been in possession of the circumstances contained in the Report for several months past. This being manifestly the case, he argued, that it was the bounden duty of the Secretary of State to have crushed the conspiracy, if such existed, in the bud. He never before heard of a government remaining inactive on such an occasion; and, by their supineness, nursing the treason till they thought it ripe for punishment; he wished, however, to consider the business in quite a different point of view.

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He had paid as much attention as possible to the Report, and to the speech of the Noble Secretary of State. He had expected something like proofs of the existence of a conspiracy, which would have fully warranted the propriety of carrying up to the Throne the address which had just been proposed. From all, however, that he had heard or seen, he drew a different conclusion from that insisted on by the Noble Secretary of State. He did not think that more respect was due to a letter from one minister to another, than to the letter of any other individual. He saw nothing like proofs of a conspiracy, sufficient to justify a proceeding that pledged that House in a great degree. The House should consider, that the measure must tend essentially to prejudice and prejudice their fellow-subjects who were in confinement; and who would soon come to trial, on charges affecting their lives. If any individual, in a public newspaper, was guilty of a similar proceeding, it would be looked upon as a very unjustifiable and iniquitous thing. In this point of view he entreated their Lordships to consider the question with due attention, to consider the dignity of their characters as members of a court of judicature, which ought to prevent them from coming to any resolution that could possibly influence juries, or affect the interests of those unfortunate persons, now in confinement, when their trials came on; more especially as they might afterwards come by appeal, or writ of error, before that House for a final decision. On these considerations, the Earl said, he thought their Lordships bound by principles of justice and humanity to negative the proposition offered to the House by the Secretary of State. One consequence perhaps not dreamt of by ministers would probably follow this trial; it would lead the rulers of France to imagine that there did exist a conspiracy in this country, so dangerous in its nature, as to demand the utmost strength being given to the Executive Government; and that such conspiracy was favourable to the designs of the French against Great Britain. There was no evidence, he insisted, against the persons confined, to shew that they wished to overawe the Government, and he denied that there was any proof of the arms. After the riots of 1780, he asked, if any individual that suffered was charged with a conspiracy to overawe the Government? and yet there was a greater pretext at that period than at present, for ministers to introduce harsh and violent measures. As to the Corresponding Society attempting to overawe Government, the idea was ridiculous and absurd. Such men as Hardy and Adams could not have effected any such thing: In fact, they had done nothing more than follow the footsteps of men of the first consequence in the

country. Their Lordships must recollect the Societies that existed at a distant period, the committees that had been then formed, and the resolutions which they had adopted, founded on the memorable vote of the House of Commons, "That the influence of the Crown was increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished;" resolutions that pointed out the shameful expenditure of the public money, and the necessity of an abolition of sinecure places. They should recollect, that a society had existed, consisting of one hundred and three, for the express and avowed purpose of electing delegates and appointing meetings, to take into consideration certain grievances, to propose remedies, and, in every sense of the words, to overawe the Parliament. These meetings had distributed their resolutions throughout the kingdom. To corroborate his observations on this point, he read the minutes and resolutions entered into at that time, and called the attention of the House to the names of those who were present at such meetings; it would be found that they were not men of a description low and inconsiderable, but some of the first characters in the kingdom: In the list of the members were the names of the Dukes of Portland and Richmond, the Marquis of Rockingham, the Earls of Derby, Egremont, and Coventry, Mr. Burke, Mr. Thomas Grenville, and the Hon. Thomas Townshend, who was as eager in the pursuit of the object as others. These were characters whose rank, influence, and weight in the country, was more to be dreaded than those of the persons to whom he had adverted. Their addresses had been sent to Hereford, and were objected to there, as tending to overturn the Legislature, and to produce measures subversive of the constitution.

These proceedings, at that time, were far more violent than those of any of the Societies of the present day; and the avowed purpose of them was to overawe the conduct of Parliament in a much more determined and effectual manner; yet the Legislature had not thought fit to take any notice of them at all. Notwithstanding the forbearance of the Executive Government at that time, it had not been known that any harm resulted from these proceedings; on the contrary, the country had never experienced a more unexampled and peaceable state of prosperity than it did for a considerable time afterwards.

He next adverted to the proceedings of the Common Council of London and the city of York, which resolved, that the introduction of the Contractors' Bill was a clear proof of his Majesty's ministers to persevere in extending to the Crown an unconstitutional influence. On this occasion, he said, that the *Habeas Corpus Act* had not been suspended; and he asked, of

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what greater crime were Hardy and Adams charged, than that to which he had alluded? The most marked thing, he said, in the Report was, that these Societies intended to assemble a Convention in October next. This was one of the most favourite impressions which the Committee wished to make on the House; but how this could be construed into a crime of high treason, was what he could not explain. The names of Hamilton Rowan and the Hon. Simon Butler had been introduced to prove, that there was a systematic plan in the three kingdoms, to overawe the Government, and subvert the constitution; but the visit of those gentlemen to Edinburgh, it was well known, was of quite a different nature.

His Lordship contrasted and pointed out the inconsistency that appeared between the Reports of the two Houses of Parliament, and stated in what particulars the contradictions were to be traced: He confessed he was rather inclined to think, that most attention had been paid to the drawing up of the Report in the other House. It was stated by the one, that the first appearance of those practices at Edinburgh, commenced at a meeting of the British Convention, in 1793; whereas the other laid particular stress upon two former meetings, which took place at Edinburgh in 1792, of which the Reports of their Lordships' Committee took not the least notice, though of the same kind as the Convention held in 1793.

It was, he said, a little whimsical for ministers, of all men, to undertake to prove that there was a republican party in Great Britain, and a Royalist party in France; for such, with regard to their arguments, had apparently been their object of late. This in his mind would have a worse effect than any address that could be presented by Frost or Barlow; and he had no doubt, Robespierre would found a report on the Secretary of State's speech and proposition, that would make France exult in the weakness of the minister's support in this country. He should therefore give his dissent to the motion.

The Earl of Coventry rose to justify his conduct in 1780. The object had at that time been solely reform of Parliament; an object pursued by peaceable, legal, and constitutional means. There had at that time been no attempt to call a Convention, or to procure arms. Without being guilty, therefore, of the smallest inconsistency, the Earl said, he should that day support the motion for the address.

Lord Sydney apologized for delaying the Noble Earl [*Lord Mansfield*, who had risen at the same time with the Noble Viscount]. He rose, he said, in consequence of the personal allusion that had been made to him, along with other respectable persons; he declared he was proud of having his name men-

tioned with that of the Duke of Portland; the fact was, that he had never attended those meetings more than once or twice, and for the plainest reason,—he differed in a great degree from them upon the subject of Parliamentary Reform; having consented to join the meetings unwillingly, on condition that they went no farther than the superadding a certain number of Knights for Shires. His Lordship said, he found the schemes of those who met so wild and various, that he could not concur but with very few of them. One party proposed the additional number of Knights of Shires, and another said it was only adding an increase to the aristocracy. An instance he recollected that was peculiarly singular: Among other extravagant propositions, it was objected that any Member of Parliament was pure enough to be of the Committee for managing the purposes of the meeting, and therefore they rejected all the Members of Parliament present, and chose a person * who had been convicted of bribery at an election, and was just come out of the King's Bench prison, as one of the members. Possibly, his Lordship said, he might be deemed an *aristocrat* for what he had said that day. He did not know precisely what an *aristocrat* was. In English the word had no correct meaning. In France it was a word of abuse much in fashion, as other words had been of late, and he supposed it meant, that one man called another *aristocrat*, whom he wished to have assassinated or murdered. Perhaps a strange advertisement †, that had appeared in the papers that day, was to be understood as giving a direct definition of it, and that it meant a man riding in a carriage: If not, he really knew not what its meaning was. In the aversion, which he had always entertained to innovation and reform, he had the good fortune to concur with some of the most respectable persons, such as the present Duke of Portland, and the late Marquis of Rockingham; names which it was impossible to mention without the highest veneration and respect. Finding the proceeding of the meeting so incongruous as he had stated, he attended one

* Mr. Brand Hollis.

† The following, we presume, was the advertisement alluded to by his Lordship:

“Whereas an hired band of ruffians attacked my house in Mansfield-street, in the dead of the night between the 11th and 12th of June instant, and set it on fire at different times; and whereas a gentleman's carriage passed several times to and fro in front of my house, and the aristocrat or other person who was in the said carriage, gave money to the people in the street to encourage them; this is to request the friends of liberty and good order to send me any authentic information they can procure, respecting the name and place of abode of the said aristocrat or other person who was in the carriage above-mentioned; in order that he may be made amenable to the law.

“June 12th, 1794.

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or two meetings only, and never again went near them. But even admitting, for the sake of argument, what he might seriously deny, that he had been as eager as the rest, could it be charged against that meeting, that they aimed at overawing Parliament, or had recourse to arms, to be privately provided? Was there any among them at that period who entertained or were suspected of any designs of overturning the constitution? They knew too well how much easier it was to throw down than to build up; nor were they so wild as to think of substituting vain fancies and untried speculation, for the solid advantages of experience and wisdom. With respect to the present situation of affairs, he was so convinced of the danger which had been impending over our heads, that he cordially assented to the propriety of the Report made, and of course would support the address then moved.

The Earl of Lauderdale explained, by declaring, that the Noble Lord who spoke last had totally misunderstood the arguments he had used. He had not thrown any imputation upon that Society of which the Noble Lord had been a member; but had asserted as a fact, that the same imputations of disaffection and disloyalty, so liberally bestowed in the present day upon certain Societies, were equally liberally scattered at that period upon that Society.

The Earl of Mansfield declared, that he felt more than ordinary anxiety upon the present occasion, as he was about to deliver, not merely his own sentiments upon the Report before their Lordships, but those with which he had been charged by a Noble Friend (the Duke of Portland), then suffering under the severest misfortune that could wring the heart of man, who yet so far remembered his public duties, amidst his private woes, as to commission him thus publicly to declare his perfect approbation of, and acquiescence in, the Report made by their Committee, and the measure now founded upon that Report. The Committee might therefore be considered as having been unanimous in their agreement to the Report. Thus far, the Earl said, he had spoken for another; the rest that he should say was to be regarded as his own private sentiments upon the subject. The Noble Earl (Lauderdale) had attempted to undervalue the danger to be apprehended from the present Societies, from the supposed insignificance both of their numbers and their consequence. With respect to the former of those, supposing their numbers as low as they pleased, as few as 200, yet there was not a school-boy but knew that the *servile war* which shook the Roman republic to its very foundation was, at its commencement, carried on by no more than seventy slaves, who made their escape, and, in self-

self-defence, turned upon their pursuers. He stated the great danger that Edinburgh had escaped, in consequence of the stop that had been effectually put to any farther meeting of the British Convention in that city, and the just and exemplary punishment of such of its members as had been convicted of sedition. With regard to the overt acts which had been committed, he referred the House to the Appendix of the Committee; it was evident from their plan, that the members of the British Convention meant to profit by what had happened in London in the sad business of the riots of the year 1780. The Bank was then left as the last object of the rioters; whereas the Scotch Convention meant to make it one of their first. Their design was to make a fire in the town, and draw the attention of the soldiery to it, in order to induce them to quit the Castle and bring them to it, and then to seize the Banks and the Castle at once, having previously armed their adherents to enable them to make a formidable resistance to the military. He therefore considered the city of Edinburgh as having had a most fortunate escape, and it ought to be a lesson to their Lordships to take early and effectual measures by way of precaution, and in order to prevent the possibility of a similar danger coming nearer to their own doors. He appealed to the Noble Lord, so skilled in Italian poetry, whether it did not remind him of a passage, which, by a free translation of the poet*, might be rendered thus: "Having reached the shore, after the utmost danger from the warring elements, he looked back with horror and tremulation on the storm that he had escaped." In like manner, no doubt, had the object of the English Societies been suffered to come within the reach of those who aimed at it, they would have acted, and seized upon the persons of the magistrates and judges, and then, after having opened the prisons to increase their forces, proceeded to Parliament, armed with their pikes, to present their petitions for reform at the point of them, which they might conceive would have a more graceful appearance than if done in any other manner. With respect to the rank and consequence of those concerned in the present conspiracies, he had no hesitation in declaring it as his opinion, that the Societies who appeared to stand forward in the business, were but the tools and instruments in the hands of others more intelligent and more powerful, who artfully kept themselves behind the curtain, and, themselves concealed, played off their puppets upon the Public. His Lordship justified the conduct of the meetings held in the year 1789

* Dante,

from any imputation of treason and disloyalty, and denied that they bore resemblance either in their object or their means of attaining it, to those meetings made the subject of the present Report. Though never at one of them himself, and but little acquainted with them, he could lay down that position. No man at any of those meetings held the strong language that had been held in the more modern Societies, as stated in their own papers printed in the Report then under consideration. No man talked of resorting to arms, or relying upon themselves and their own rules, with utter contempt of the authority of Parliament and the most solemn acts of the Legislature. With regard to the argument of the Noble Earl, that danger was to be apprehended from the publication of those plots, by means of the proposed Address, he denied the argument altogether. There might indeed have been some danger on one of the grounds stated by the Noble Earl, if the Address had been in any degree personal, but there could be none, worded as the Address was, in a general manner alluding to notorious facts, but studiously avoiding to allude to persons now under progress to trial. Neither could it tend to inspire the French with an idea that a strong party in their favour existed in this country, and to shew how much he differed from his Noble Friend in his conception of the effect of the conduct of Government in this measure, he would endeavour to make a speech for Barrere upon the principle stated by the Noble Earl. Barrere, in his opinion, would address the National Convention and his august and bare-breeched hearers in somewhat like the following terms: "This is a most unfortunate discovery in England, unfortunate in point of time, and equally unfortunate in its probable consequences; our friends are stopped in their career, and the result is to us disastrous in the extreme, since it proves that ninety-nine out of a hundred are decidedly in favour of the Government and Constitution of their country."

The Earl of Lauderdale rose again to explain. He said he had lived too long, short as was his political experience, to look for any thing like political consistency in almost any character living. He read an extract from the Duke of Richmond's letter to Colonel Sharman, to prove that men no lower in rank, in consequence, than his Grace, had, on the subject of Parliamentary Reform, used as strong language as any that had been used in the circulatory letters of the Corresponding Societies. The same obloquy that had been cast on these Societies, had been cast during the American war on those who then ventured to oppose the measures of Government, as would be recollected by some of their Lordships; similar charges

charges in particular had been stated of their carrying on a correspondence with the enemy.

The Lord Chancellor drew the distinction which he conceived clearly marked the extreme difference between the meetings in 1780, and those of the present day. Had the latter, like the former, contented themselves with mere words, and not proceeded to something more, to overt acts of treason, it was not to be conceived that the Executive Government would not in one instance as in the other, have passed them by in silence; but when the contrary was known to every man, not only from the Report, but from the general and public notoriety of the fact, surely Government was not to be accused of tardiness, who had uniformly applied the remedy as the disease appeared, and who had only delayed the last decisive measures, until further hesitation might have involved them in the dangerous situation of having actual insurrection to resist. With respect to the Report itself, there were one or two points only to which he intended to allude. It had been asserted, by the Noble Earl, that the treasonable designs were artfully coupled with the meeting of the British Convention in Edinburgh, by stating that this was the first appearance of them. And he had argued against the falsity of this position, by reminding them of the meeting of the Convention of 1792. That Convention was by no means similar in proceeding to that held in 1793. It did not wait for Delegates from other Societies; it did not avow an intention to overawe the Legislature; and, what was most material of all, it did not prepare arms and avow a design to subvert and overturn the Government. His Lordship defended the Report as consistent, grounded in the facts it stated, and both proper and justifiable according to the evidence. With regard to the Report of the House of Commons, he declared, he had not seen it, but he should imagine it was pretty much the same as that of their own, unless the Committee of the other House had before them evidence adduced which had not been brought before their Lordships' Committee. With regard to the other point, that of Mr. Hamilton Rowan and Mr. Simon Butler, as coming over from Ireland to Scotland, as Delegates from the Society of United Irishmen, for the purpose of attending the British Convention, the Committee, equally ignorant of what might have been the motives or intentions of those Gentlemen in visiting Edinburgh, had guardedly stated, that they appeared in the Convention. If there were other persons who had better sources of information, he was sorry it was not known to the Committee; he for one would only say, that had he been aware that the Noble Earl, from his superior means of intelligence, was so capable of giving information,

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formation, and throwing particular light upon the business, as he seemed to be from his speech, he would have advised the Committee to have intreated the Noble Earl's attendance and assistance. In like manner too, if they had thought the Noble Lord could have given them better information on this subject, they should certainly have desired him to amend their Report.

The Earl of Lauderdale spoke once more in explanation; he said, he certainly should persist in maintaining, that imperfect and vague charges against persons under accusation, and sanctioned by that House, were much more prejudicial to them than a fair and complete statement of their supposed offences; because if the latter was given, every man could make up his mind impartially on the subject, whereas he could not do so from partial insinuations, such as the Report contained. With regard to insinuations of another sort, which the Noble and Learned Lord had thrown out against him personally, about his sources of information and connexions with those Societies; it was well known how totally groundless and false they were; the Noble and Learned Lord knew that to be the case; and as often as he chose to indulge himself in bringing them forward, he would treat them with the ridicule and contempt they deserved. There was not an action of his life he would not gladly have known to every one of their Lordships; and his character and conduct were too well known to the House and to the country, and too firmly established, to be shaken by any insinuation that could fall from the Learned Lord, who, when he contended with him upon law, treated him with wit; when upon matter of fact, with insinuation. The whole of his knowledge respecting Mr. Rowan and Mr. Butler's visit to Edinburgh, was drawn from the Reports of both Houses, and from the general notoriety of what every man in Scotland knew as well as himself.

The Lord Chancellor, in explanation, declared, that he meant no insinuation whatever with respect to the Noble Earl; nor could he conceive any reason why, upon the mention of the names of Mr. Hamilton Rowan and Mr. Simon Butler, the motives of whose journey to Scotland the Noble Earl seemed to be aware of, he should imagine that he meant any thing like a personal or offensive allusion. Though the cause of those Gentlemen's visit might be known to every person in Scotland, he assured the Noble Earl it was not known to him.

The question on the Address was put and carried without a division; and ordered to be sent to the House of Commons for their concurrence.

Lord Grenville gave notice, That he would on Tuesday the 17th, move the Thanks of the House to Admiral Lord Hood, and the Officers and Men under his command, for their services in the Mediterranean.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, *June 13.*

There being only fifteen Members present, they necessarily separated.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

SATURDAY, *June 14.*

Sent a Message to the Commons, that their Lordships would further proceed in the Trial of Warren Hastings, Esq. on Monday the 16th.

The Penitentiary House Bill was read a third time, and some amendments proposed by the Lord Chancellor, passed, and ordered back to the Commons.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

SATURDAY, *June 14.*

Received a Message from the Lords, that their Lordships would proceed further on the Trial of Warren Hastings, Esq. on Monday the 16th.

There being only three Members present, they separated.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY, *June 16.*

After their Lordships' return from the Trial of Mr. Hastings, it was moved, That their Lordships be summoned to attend their duty in the House on the 17th.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, *June 16.*

An Address was ordered to be presented to the King, to make some provision for the Chaplain of the House.

The printing of the Journals was ordered, and 1200*l.* for the expence, and also for the expence of printing Reports, Bills, and Papers for the House.

Mr. Secretary Dundas presented the Militia returns, which were ordered to be laid on the Table.

ADDRESS.

[*June 16.*]

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ADDRESS.

Two of the Judges brought up an Address from the Lords to his Majesty, upon the Second Report of the Secret Committee, to which they desired the concurrence of the Commons.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, after the reading of the Address, proposed, that it should be considered in the Order of Day.

IMPEACHMENT OF WARREN HASTINGS, ESQ.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer gave notice, that, as the charges against Warren Hastings, Esq. for High Crimes and Misdemeanours, were now closed, he should to-morrow make a motion, that the Thanks of that House be given to the Managers for their conduct of the Impeachment.

SECOND REPORT OF THE SECRET COMMITTEE.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer brought up various papers, by way of Supplement * to the Second Report of the Committee of Secrecy, which were read. They contained a letter from Charles Grey, Esq. Member of that House, to the Right Hon. William Pitt, inclosing others, signed by Mr. Daniel Stuart. The purport of this communication from Mr. Grey to the Minister was, to shew there had not been any communication between the Society of the Friends of the People, of which Mr. Grey was a Member, and that Convention which was held at Edinburgh, after the proceedings of that Convention bore the appearance of violent intentions, such as insinuating on Universal Suffrage and Annual Parliaments, &c. The Report of the Committee stated the propriety of communicating the whole proceedings to the House.

Mr. Grey said, that he had received a letter from Mr. Skirving, on the subject of a Parliamentary Reform; that letter he had shewn to one or two friends, but as the Society could not be convened, and no Committee was sitting, in the time required for an answer, he sent one from himself, stating, that a Member of the Society, the Earl of Lauderdale, was then in Edinburgh, with whom the Secretary to the Scottish Convention might communicate. *Mr. Grey* defended the Society from corresponding with the Secretary of the British Convention, and thought it extremely strange that this letter, in explanation of the others, did not appear on the face of the Report.

Mr. Sheridan said, though he well knew when the Order of the Day should be moved, for the purpose of taking the Second Part of the Report of the Secret Committee into considera-

* Vide the Appendix to this volume, p. 184.

tion, that there would be an opportunity of discussing the contents of the papers just read, yet he could not omit that opportunity of saying a few words, which naturally suggested themselves on hearing the Supplement read. Having the honour of being a Member of the Society of the Friends of the People, he might, he believed, without the imputation of vanity, fairly say, that he was no stranger to that truly respectable body: Feeling himself warranted in this assertion, he could not help declaring, that the part of the Supplement which related to that Society, was of a nature the most uncandid; to say the best of it, it was done in a careless manner. In the first place, it contained three letters, signed by Mr. Stuart; the first written in May, the second in the middle of October following, and the third in the latter end of the same month, and all in the year 1793. If Gentlemen would only attend a little, they would find, on the slightest examination, that these three letters were written by Mr. Stuart in his individual, and not in his official capacity. It was easy to see, from the transactions of that Society, and from a letter in that very Supplement, that when Mr. Stuart acted in his official capacity, he always said, "Signed by order of the Committee," Dan. Stuart, Secretary to the Friends of the People. Independent of this, the language of those three letters, which he had just mentioned, was of itself sufficient to convince the Committee, that it was the language of a person acting from himself. He maintained, that there appeared in the Report something like an intention to insinuate, that there existed between the Society of the Friends of the People, and that of the Convention at Edinburgh, a connexion from beginning to end; whereas it appeared that no such connexion had existed further than while that Convention professed to have nothing in view but a Reform in Parliament: This was evident from the whole tenour of the letters of Mr. Stuart, the Secretary to the Society of the Friends of the People, signed by him, and written by him as a private gentleman, and not in his official capacity, directed to Mr. Skirving at Edinburgh. No correspondence was continued after April 1793. A vote of thanks was, indeed, sent in May, to the Delegates of the Scotch Convention for their collateral endeavours to procure a Parliamentary Reform; but the vote of thanks was sent in common with others, to the several Societies instituted for that purpose. The Scotch Convention was composed of Gentlemen esteemed both for their rank, qualities, and education; but when it changed its title, and admitted other people, all intercourse ceased. He contended, that it was not fair to charge the Society with the con-

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ments of a letter expressing the sentiments of a private gentleman; but at the same time he must say, that, from the letters themselves, there was not to be extracted a sentiment which any man of honour need be ashamed of; and from what he knew of Mr. Stuart, he would say, it was not likely that he should be engaged in any thing that could call for the suspicion of the Committee, or the censure of that House. If ministers had any doubts on this subject, he wished to know why they did not send for, and examine Mr. Stuart: If they had done so, every doubt and suspicion would have been cleared up at once. He did not think that any part of this business merited much attention, further than that it proved the inattention of the Committee who formed the Report, without making the distinction between the formal signature of Mr. Stuart, as Secretary to the Society, and that of his name as a private gentleman, to a letter expressive of his own sentiments in the absence of the Society. From this inaccuracy in the Report in one part, he could not think favourably of the whole of it; but he must again say, he saw in the letter nothing that any well-wisher to the Constitution of this country ought to be ashamed to avow. The inference then to be drawn was, that it convinced him more and more of the caution with which the whole of the Report should be received; for if the Committee ventured to place such a paper as the present before the House, which certainly called upon every Gentleman in it, who belonged to the Society to which it referred, and who, however unimportant the matter, must feel themselves called upon to detect every error that presented itself, what must it be with respect to the other parts of the Report? He was sorry for having troubled the House so long on a point that was scarcely worthy of notice; but he thought he could not, in justice to the House, say less. There was another letter written by Mr. Stuart, which he hoped the Committee had not found, because, if they had found it, the Committee must be convinced, that Mr. Stuart acted merely as an individual; since in that very letter to which he alluded, the writer openly acknowledges, that he acted from himself alone in that correspondence with Mr. Skirving. If the Committee had found it, he was certain they should have given it a place with the rest.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer entered into a defence of the Secret Committee, and insisted that they could not have acted otherwise than they did, consistent with their duty. Those letters signed by Mr. Stuart, were found upon Skirving when he was apprehended. The Hon. Member (Mr. Sheridan) had charged the Committee with carelessness; if the Hon. Mem-

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ber would reflect a little, he would find that the epithet was very improperly applied. When the Supplement was drawing up, he was ready to confess, that the Committee entertained some doubts as to those letters; for they did observe, that some were signed by Mr. Stuart, with the addition of "Secretary to the Society of the Friends of the People," and that others were not. How did the Committee act on that occasion? In the most candid and commendable manner in his opinion. Those which seemed to be written by Mr. Stuart in his individual capacity, they inserted merely without any comment; and yet, when they compared the language of those letters with that of the official ones, the resemblance was so strong, that it was difficult to say what line of distinction should be drawn; especially when it was considered, that they came from the pen of a Secretary, who was high in the confidence of the Society.

The Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sheridan) had mentioned a letter written by Mr. Stuart to Skirving, which that Hon. Gentleman said, he hoped the Committee had not found: He said so, perhaps, because he was pretty certain the Committee had found it, but they did not think proper to insert it. That letter was written in answer to a letter which Mr. Stuart had received from Mr. Skirving in October last, immediately previous to the meeting of the British Convention in Scotland; the latter had expressed a very earnest wish, that the Society of the Friends of the People in London would send a Delegate to the British Convention. Mr. Stuart, in reply, informs him, in the first place, that the notice was too short; that most of the Members of the Society were out of town; that it would be necessary to call a Committee, in order to call a General Meeting; that such a thing was not in his power; he only acted as Secretary, and that his correspondence with Mr. Skirving was merely that of an individual. He had, at the same time, spoken to some of the Members, and that one of them, a Noble Lord (Lauderdale), was at that time in Edinburgh; he did not doubt, however, if Mr. Skirving consulted his Lordship, that he would receive him with all that politeness which belonged to his character. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, he could not conclude without making one observation, that Mr. Stuart, in one of those very letters, supposed to be written by him in his official capacity, desires Mr. Skirving to transmit to him the Edinburgh Gazetteer, a paper which contained the debates and proceedings of the British Convention, and to charge it to the account of the Society of the Friends of the People.

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Mr. Sheridan declared, that his objections to the suppression of that letter were not removed. *Mr. Stuart*, in his correspondence, whenever he wrote officially, signed himself "Secretary to the Society of the Friends of the People," but he did not appear in that character with respect to the letter in question.

Mr. Grey said, he could not help observing, that even dates were perverted for the avowed purpose of involving facts that had not the least relation to each other. He challenged the Right Hon. Gentleman, and all those who acted with him, to produce a single instance in which the Society of the Friends of the People in London had held any communication with the Scotch Convention, or under whatever name it afterwards assumed, save and except once, and once only, and that was in 1792, when a number of Gentlemen, amongst whom were to be found characters of the first respectability in that part of the country, assembled at Edinburgh, for the purpose of obtaining a Reform in Parliament. The views of those Gentlemen were limited to that object only, and did not extend to Universal Suffrage, or Annual Parliaments. They transmitted to the Society to which he had the honour of belonging, a copy of Resolutions that had received their concurrence, the receipt of which was acknowledged by the Society of the Friends of the People assembled at Freemasons' Tavern. It was true, that in May 1793, shortly after he had the honour of making a motion in that House for a Parliamentary Reform, the Society of the Friends of the People, in consequence of the failure of that motion, addressed the different Societies embarked in the same cause, and encouraged them to persevere in the object of their pursuit till it was attained. This address was of a general nature, and directed to all. Why then wrest it from its true character, and apply it to the British Convention alone? It was by no means candid so to strain the nature and meaning of that letter; nor did he expect that it would have been done; but it was easy to see for what purpose these alarms were calculated.

Mr. Grey next called the attention of the House to the Supplement, in order to shew that the Committee, at the very first view, could not but be convinced, that the three letters, signed by *Mr. Stuart*, without any addition to his name, were written in his individual capacity; and, that if they even should be so far mistaken at the first view, as to suppose they were written in his official capacity, that the letter to which his Hon. Friend (*Mr. Sheridan*) had alluded, and which the Right Hon. Chancellor of the Exchequer acknowledged to be in possession of, the Committee would have set them right. He wished to know what was the meaning of the omission of that

that letter. At the same time he did not wish, by any means, to have it understood, that he was anxious to draw the distinction between Mr. Stuart in his official and individual capacity; if these unauthorised letters from Mr. Stuart contained nothing more than what he had just heard read, he declared he was ready to avow every sentiment which they contained.

Mr. Lambton said, when the First Part of the Report was brought up, he read it with all the attention in his power; he felt himself upon that ground authorised to say, that he was not induced to pay the most implicit faith to the contents of it. In many instances he found the facts, stated as they were in the Report, did not lead to the deductions of the Committee; but in the present instance, with respect to the Society of the Friends of the People, it was plain to what a dilemma the Committee were driven: And again, if the letters written by Mr. Stuart, in his individual capacity, were written in his official, what did they contain? Did they encourage the British Convention to go to the lengths they went? By no means; on the contrary, they breathed the language of moderation!

Major Maitland declared that he should not have spoken in the present stage of the business, were it not for an allusion that had been made to a noble relation of his in one of Mr. Stuart's letters. There was no person who had the honour of being admitted to the acquaintance of that Noble Lord (Lauderdale) who would venture, he presumed, to take any improper liberties with his name, as that Noble Lord had not lent his name to any wild plan of Parliamentary Reform, such as annual Parliaments, universal suffrage, &c. he admitted only those to his confidence that he found worthy of it. He assured the House, that his noble relation had not any confidential information what the intentions of the British Convention were, nor had he any communication with its Members. He was applied to by Mr. Skirving, and refused his countenance, observing, that he feared from the character of certain persons admitted as members from London, some violent measure might be introduced; the Noble Lord conjured the Convention therefore to be cautious, prescribing, at the same time, a perseverance in their efforts to effect a Parliamentary Reform on constitutional grounds, but entreating them also to persevere with temper and moderation, as well as firmness, and not aim at objects, which even if attained, might lead to extremes, which every considerate man must wish to avoid.

Mr. Francis wished that Mr. Stuart's letter to Mr. Skirving, which the Committee had omitted, should be read, as he understood it was a short one, and as the Committee were in possession of it. The letter was accordingly read.—*Mr. Francis* then

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commented on it, in order to shew, that if it had been inserted, it would have saved the House much time in discussion, as it would at once separate those articles which the Committee seemed anxious to confound.

Mr. Sheridan rose to explain. He pointed out several articles which appeared to be confounded with respect to dates, and said that as so many mistakes in the Report had been detected, the House had a right to disbelieve the whole, and thus the Report was of no value. He could not advise Mr. Grey to practise *candour*, because, judging from the implications and insinuations made in their Report, he could not promise him a return of candour from the Committee. For his part, he could discover no impropriety in either of Mr. Stuart's letters; nor should he, were they written under his direction, be afraid of any consequences, or ashamed to disavow them. He said there were three untruths in the Report, which consisted in the account of the meeting of the Society, and the letters written by Mr. Stuart on the 23d of July and the 29th of October. He was sorry the Committee had seen the letter which explained the innocence of the Society, because it betrayed the malice or the negligence of the Committee; and therefore, for their honour, he wished it had been never seen. The reason for the intentional omission of this letter was ascribed to a delicate regard for the reputation of a Nobleman incorporated in that Society. [*The Chancellor of the Exchequer* said he was misrepresented.] He had really so understood the Right Honourable Gentleman; and if he was deceived, requested some cogent reason to be assigned for the omission of the letter in question. The suppression of it was certainly remarkable; for if any doubts were entertained of the Society's collusion, it would have been but honourable to have examined the Secretary. The Secretary, however, not having been examined, and parts of the Report being so inaccurate, he declared he had but a bad opinion of the rest of the batch.

The Attorney General rose to notice certain inadvertencies which dropped from Mr. Sheridan in his speech; after having touched on each, he said in reply to Mr. Francis, that if that Honourable Gentleman knew nothing of the proceedings of the British Convention, he ought not to give his vote that evening, and that in regard to him the Committee had mispent their time. He commented on Mr. Stuart's letters, for the purpose of shewing, that the language of those letters would amount almost to a proof, that they were not written by Mr. Stuart in his individual capacity.

Mr. Francis explained. He said, he should certainly give his vote, and that the Learned Gentleman had not answered his charge.

The Speaker informed him, that if the Learned Gentleman had not expressed his opinions with precision, he ought to be called on to explain.

Mr. Whitbread, jun. thought the Learned Gentleman had not succeeded. He noticed the contradistinction in the signature of the personal and the official letters, adverted again to the misstatement of the Committee, and again demanded why they did not proceed to an examination of *Mr. Stuart*, which would have illustrated the whole affair? If they had been inclined to exculpate the Society, or even to deal candidly with it, the familiarity of the style of *Mr. Stuart's* unauthorized letters alone would have been considered a sufficient elucidation.

Mr. Dundas disclaimed all idea of going into discussion of the Report; he therefore congratulated the House, the Country, and Magistrates of Scotland, on the conversation which had taken place that night. The result of that conversation afforded a full answer to all the calumny, which had been so industriously circulated against the Court of Justiciary for their laudable discharge of their duty, since it manifested that those very Gentlemen, who had been most forward in censuring the Magistracy of Scotland for their conduct with respect to the British Convention, seemed now to be anxious only to fly from any implication with the members of that British Convention.

Mr. Fox said, he retained, in their full force, all the sentiments he had expressed on the conduct of the Magistrates of Edinburgh upon this subject; and he wished to know by what authority the papers of *Mr. Skirving* had been seized, he being clear it was illegal to seize them at all, if the person possessing them was not charged with High Treason: He hoped some information would be given on that subject at a future day. He should not, *Mr. Fox* said, have troubled the House at all on the topic under discussion, had it not been for the sentiments expressed by the Secretary of State; by what he had said, he had conveyed an idea, that no Society should be allowed to exist, if its principles were disavowed by all parties in that House; that was a doctrine to which he never could subscribe. There had been many Societies to which he should be sorry to belong, and whose principles and professions he could not assent to, yet whose existence was strictly legal and constitutional: He was an enemy to the idea of thus blaming any Society in the lump; it was a conduct that was not warranted by the spirit of our Constitution.

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The Supplement to the Report was then ordered to be laid on the Table, and to be printed.

THANKS TO LORD HOWE.

Mr. Secretary Dundas said he should not have occasion to trouble the House with many words upon the subject of which he had given notice some days ago. What he alluded to, was the event of the engagement in which Lord Howe had gained so glorious a victory over the enemy: The general joy and transport in the minds, and expressed in the actions, of the people, made it unnecessary for him to dwell on the general grounds of the motion with which he intended to conclude; every man felt enough in his own breast upon that occasion. He could not, however, help saying, that the victory he had mentioned, was as complete as any which the annals of our history could boast, if not more so. The victory was the more signal, as the enemy had no pretence to say that they were overpowered by superior force; it was well known, that, in consequence of the Squadron detached from the grand fleet, it was rendered inferior to that of the French. It was therefore owing to the coolness, intrepidity, and naval skill of Lord Howe, that this decided advantage was gained over the enemy. The two fleets had, in fact, contended for several days; and the victory was the result of skill, united with courage. It was the skill of the Noble Earl that enabled him to make the formidable attack which he did upon the enemy, which gave him the advantage, and which terminated so gloriously to this country. It commenced on the 28th of May, and ended on the 1st of June. In many other engagements there had been officers who could not have a share in the triumph arising from the victory of the day, the officers and commanders not perhaps agreeing as well as could be wished; but here was to be seen only one heart and one affection; one uniform scene of valour in commander, officers and men; not one blamed the conduct of the other; all joined in one career of glory, and the lowest man in the fleet thought himself the conqueror of the enemy. There was another circumstance connected with this subject, which he could not help adverting to; it was honourable to the national character of Britain; it was descriptive of its humanity: In the hour of conquest, and when the fury, which was engendered by the natural heat of so violent an action, was scarcely over, among the first of the exertions of the Noble Lord, and those who fought under him, he manifested an anxious care to save the crew of a sinking enemy's ship, perhaps on the very day and moment that the National Convention of France were passing

a decree to give their enemies no quarter. Thus Great Britain stood particularly illustrious and contra-distinguished from its sanguinary foes: These were points so clear, that he found it unnecessary to dwell upon them; they had made, they must make, a deep impression on that House and on the Public. Perhaps he might be permitted to say one word more upon the character of the Noble Earl who had thus signalized himself. He was witness to the conversation which was held between Ministers and this Noble Lord, when he took the command of the fleet, and then the ardour he expressed by his words, looks, and gestures, for a man at his time of life, were extraordinary. — The keenness of his disposition, the fond hope he expressed of meeting the enemy, and the confidence he had of being victorious, were such as made it no matter of surprise when the account came of the result of the engagement: He was therefore happy in that opportunity of bearing testimony to the nautical character of Lord Howe, who took the command of the fleet with all the fire of youth, and who had missed no opportunity of bringing the enemy to action. He flattered himself, therefore, that if any who heard him, or any who might hear what then passed in that House, had been led to harbour suspicions on the conduct of the Noble Earl, or had expressed any thing that might be supposed to proceed from doubts of his character, they would candidly allow that they had erred in judgment, and learn to be cautious in speaking slightly of the character of a great commander. It was easy to censure the commander of our grand fleet for not beating the enemy, but a commander could not be always sure of meeting that enemy. He must, however, impute this disposition to severe criticism to the national character; we testified a general impatience if, after the commencement of a war, we had been any considerable time without manifesting our superiority at sea. At no one period of our history had we, he said, been in so favourable a situation as at present, with regard to the strength of our naval force; nor at any time had we in so short a space of time taken so much from the enemy. He entered into some detail of the captures we had made of French armed vessels, amounting in all to 118; 27 of which were ships of the line, that we had burnt and destroyed. He concluded with moving, “That the thanks of the House be given to Admiral “Earl Howe, for his able and gallant conduct in obtaining a “brilliant and decisive victory over the French fleet, on the “first of June instant.”

Mr. Fox rose to give his hearty assent to the motion before the House. He declared, he had no doubt of the spirit, activity, skill, talents, or patriotism, of the Noble Earl: However

in political questions he might have the misfortune to differ from him, there was not a man in that House, or in the country, who had given higher satisfaction in all his professional life than the Noble Lord had; he therefore never heard a motion which had his approbation more decidedly than the present. He had uniformly believed, that if the Noble Earl should not engage the French fleet, it would only be because he had no opportunity of doing so. That Noble Lord had, to his knowledge, been engaged in the service of his country at a time when faction was extremely high, and, under all the difficulties that naturally arose under such circumstances, he maintained his character for spirit, skill, and talents, so as to make it impossible for any rational man to suppose that he would not meet an equal force of the enemy at any time. Having said this in mere justice to the character of the Nobleman who was the deserved object of our admiration, he must then say, he could have wished that the Right Hon. Gentleman who brought the business forward, had not brought extraneous matters before the House, under the convoy of this victorious fleet, and that he had not blended points on which opinions were divided with those on which there was, as there ought to be, perfect unanimity: Such conduct, on the part of the ministers, would, on any other occasion, call for his animadversion, but on this he should not say any thing that might, by the most perverse construction, be supposed to diminish the glorious unanimity of the day. With regard to the brilliancy of the victory, he subscribed to every word that had been said in praise of it; nor were the observations that were made on the humanity displayed on the occasion at all misplaced. This added to the numerous proofs we found in the history of battles, that true valour and humanity were nearly allied; and he hoped to God they would for ever remain inseparable companions in every Briton's breast. Of this victory he should say nothing more, than that he rejoiced in it as much as any man in England could rejoice in it; and that, considering it in a defensive view, it was extremely important to this country, as well as glorious. He could not, however, help saying, that if, at an early period of the war, any man had said that this was a matter then so doubtful, that on its happening it would be considered as a matter of great triumph, and to be rejoiced at as an event not to be expected, such a person would have been considered as making use of a very desponding observation. He rejoiced in this victory, not on account of its being beyond his hopes in the beginning, but on account of the comfortable reflection arising out of it, for it had saved us
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from the possibility, and removed our apprehensions, of an invasion from the French; and if it was made proper use of by Administration, for the wise and salutary purposes of procuring peace, it would then be indeed a blessing to this country. If turned to the purposes of peace, then we should have reason to rejoice, then it would be as solidly useful as it was unquestionably brilliant; more so, perhaps, than this country ever knew at any period of its history. If, on the contrary, it was made use of for the impracticable object of destroying the government of France, though its brilliancy should remain, its utility would cease. He should say no more upon this subject; he should not touch on the points which he could have wished the Right Hon. Gentleman had passed over, because he was extremely desirous there should not only be an unanimity in the vote, but in the language also of that House on this occasion; he verily believed that would have a good effect on the Public; he should, therefore, only say, he never gave a vote in his life with more complete and heartfelt satisfaction than the present; first, as to the Noble Earl under whose command the victory was gained; next, as to all the officers and men who acted under him, for he presumed it was to be extended to them all: A vote, he believed, never passed that House, that was followed with more general and cordial concurrence throughout this country.

Mr. Stanley approved highly of the motion, which was put and carried with loud applause.

Ordered, that the Speaker do communicate the same to Admiral Earl Howe.

Mr. Secretary Dundas then moved, That the thanks of the House be given to the rest of the officers, seamen, marines, and soldiers.

Agreed to *nem. con.*

Mr. Secretary Dundas also moved, That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, that he would be graciously pleased to give directions that a monument be raised to the memory of Captain Montague, in the collegiate church of St. Peter, Westminster, and that the House would make good the same. Agreed to *nem. con.*

Mr. Secretary Dundas then gave notice, that on Thursday the 19th, he should move the thanks of the House to another Admiral.

Mr. Sheridan said, he supposed the Right Hon. Gentleman alluded to Lord Hood; and if that was the case, on that day he should think it his duty to advance his reasons why he should oppose that vote.

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THE SECOND REPORT OF THE SECRET COMMITTEE.

The Order of the Day being read, for taking into consideration the Second Report of the Secret Committee,

The Chancellor of the Exchequer moved, That the House do agree with the House of Lords in their Address to his Majesty.

The Address being read a second time,

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, that, after the full consideration which had been given to the former Report of the Secret Committee, and the additional information contained in that upon the table, it would be unnecessary for him to go into any detail of particulars which had been already discussed, or to detain the House any longer than to make a few observations upon what the House had just heard read in the Supplement to the Second Report. The Committee, before making up their Report, had taken every opportunity in their power to obtain the best and most ample information that they possibly could obtain, and had spared no pains in endeavouring to arrive at the truth, by which means they had been able to produce such a chain of information and proof, as would not fail to convince all who chose to give attention to the subject, that what the Report contained was an accurate and fair statement of facts, well founded, and of the greatest importance. The materials on which the Committee had grounded their Report of an existing conspiracy in this country against its constitution and government, were partly collected from verbal evidence, and partly from the books and papers of those Societies which had been most active and industrious in maintaining and propagating those destructive doctrines, so much and so justly reprobated by every Englishman and every friend to his country. These materials had furnished them with ample means of proving not only the existence of a conspiracy against the State, but of its having existed for a considerable time back.

From its first origin, to the period when it was fortunately at once discovered and frustrated, an uniform system had been pursued; and the evidence contained in the Report clearly shewed, that whatever difference of expression, or difference of appearance, it might assume at different times, the object was to overturn the constituted authorities of the country, and to overawe and take possession of the functions of Parliament, and completely to destroy the constitution in all its branches. All this, as would appear evidently by the Report, was to be done through the means of a Convention formed, and to be conducted, upon principles similar to those of the National Convention of France, and as certainly calculated to produce in this country all the atrocities and ruin which the French Convention had produced in that. This Convention was to have

have possessed what was called the collected will of the people, and was to be the organ of the public will, which, as the sovereign will of the people at large, was declared to be the sole foundation of the Government, and, as they were pleased to say, of every Government. To illustrate this intention of forming a National Convention upon the plan of that in France, it was only necessary to look at the Report, and refer to the proceedings of those Societies, particularly to that part which contained Barrere's Reports to the National Convention of France. They had recommended to the perusal of their followers an elaborate treatise of Barrere's, recommending the exercise of the power of the people, and that system which denied the authority of lawful legislation, and the inviolability of the sovereign. At different periods, though the main design was never departed from, different pretences had been assumed by those Societies, and amongst the last, and that which they had thought the most plausible, was that of Parliamentary Reform. This, they had said, they were to obtain by petitions to Parliament; but if that mode failed, they had likewise resolved, and pre-determined, that other and stronger measures were to be adopted to effect it; and thus, in case of a failure in their pretended object, after having petitioned, they had made every necessary preparation for assembling a National Convention, which was to have such efficient force and authority as would totally annihilate every other existing power in this country. From the proceedings of what was called the British Convention at Edinburgh, and the connexion and correspondence between that Society and those in London, it was clear beyond dispute, that the whole system was an uniform adoption and imitation of French principles, an endeavour to introduce them into this country, with the hopes of producing similar effects, and an avowed declaration, that universal representation, and every revolutionary mode of subverting the established constitution of this country, was the grand and only object of their conspiracy and plots. That their intention was to overawe the Parliament was evident from the time they had pointed out as the fittest for assembling their Convention. It appeared by the Report, that if Parliament passed certain acts, which they had some dread might happen, then they were to meet in Convention, and take by force what redress they might think proper by this organ of the public will, which they themselves had created. In arranging and carrying through their plans, they could be traced from one step to another, all along proceeding upon the same systematic imitation of French principles and French measures, till at last they had the audacious presumption to enter into a

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correspondence all over the country, for the purpose of considering of the most proper place to appoint for this Convention to assemble at. Various objections had been made, in the course of this correspondence, to different places proposed; but, by a minute attention to the Report, it would be found, that all the dispute had been about the place, not about the purpose for which this Convention was to be called together. Early in the proceedings of the Convention, the House, by the Report of the Committee, saw that they had France for a model, and the Convention was constructed accordingly. It next became enlarged in its views; and as it disclosed them, the House saw that they imitated the subdivision of France, the Committee of Finance of France, and the honours of the sitting. The foundation, the system of this Convention, demonstrated that the members hoped to lay down a model and rule for future Conventions; and had nothing less in view than something that should represent every corner of the kingdom. They had also Committees of Emergency, and Committees of Observation; and when dispersed by the laws of Scotland, they appointed Committees of Observation to watch over the acts of the Legislature, and had professed a design for assembling another Convention. When some of the Societies agreed to co-operate, Gentlemen saw, by the Report, the most violent disputes about terms; and that one Society shrunk with horror from the proceedings of the other. Circular letters had been written and received, and a Convention agreed upon, at the same time that Secret Committees acted in both Scotland and this country; but the place of meeting was concealed until the Secret Committee should find it prudent to give notice to the delegates. It appeared that circular letters had been sent all over the kingdom, to the most remote places, and that the same mad project had been cherished equally, wherever that connexion was kept up with those Societies in the metropolis.

Having gone over many of his arguments on the former debates on this subject, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, if, after all that had appeared in the First Report, all that had come out since, and after the strong and incontrovertible evidence that this conspiracy had existed, and was systematically carried on for a length of time, and that its objects were, the subversion of Government, the annihilation of the authority and functions of Parliament, and the complete destruction of the British constitution, any further proofs were wanting, he would only desire Gentlemen to look into the two or three last pages of the Report, where all these points were so decidedly and clearly set forth, as to banish every doubt that could possi-

bly have been entertained on the subject. There was still one thing more upon which it was necessary to say a few words, and that was, that all this could not have been done, nor any of their plans carried into execution, without force; and that it was their intention to have used force, no man could doubt, who read the papers contained in the Report, which not only proved the intention, but the actual state of preparation in which they were on this head, as well as how much their activity in planning their measures was exceeded by the extent of their execution of the means for carrying them into effect.

There had been some Hon. Gentlemen, who, when the temporary suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act was proposed, had doubted these facts; they had, however, at the same time allowed, that if they had sufficient proofs of their existence, they would be as ready to agree to the measure then debated, as they were to oppose it at that time. This, he thought, was the time when they ought, and, he trusted, would retract what they had said of their former doubts; of this he was sure, that if the Report on the table could not produce from them that acknowledgment, nothing that he could say would have any effect. Having observed that the proceedings of those Societies were so much reprobated, and particularly by all the real friends to reform, and every one being at more pains than another to disclaim all connexion with them, he could not imagine that a difference of opinion existed in that House respecting their objects, or the means by which they had intended to obtain them, and therefore he trusted, there would be an unanimous vote for the address to the Throne, testifying their abhorrence and dread of the proceedings which had been going forward; and likewise their steady attachment to the constitution, and determination to give every assistance, and use their utmost exertion to preserve it inviolate from the desperate attacks that had been made upon it. He concluded by moving, "That the House do agree to the Address voted " by the House of Lords."

Mr. Lambton desired the attention of the House, conceiving himself alluded to in an observation which had fallen from the Right Hon. Gentleman who spoke last. The Right Hon. Gentleman had said, that he expected support from those who had declared their readiness to afford that support, provided they had any proof of the collecting of arms. He had not, Mr. Lambton said, ever promised his support upon those terms precisely; but had declared, that he was ready to give his support if they could produce the collection of arms to any dangerous amount; and that promise he was ready to fulfil, whenever such a fact should be clearly made out. He was,
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for his own part, a warm friend to investigation, as leading to the discovery of the truth. For this reason it was, that last year he had seconded the motion made for the appointment of a committee to inquire into the existence and causes of those riots and discontents, which were supposed to have existed throughout the country, and which were made the pretext of calling out the militia. He could not, however, but differ greatly in opinion from the Right Hon. Gentleman on the present occasion, because he saw nothing in the Report, neither had he heard any thing in the debate on the subject, that warranted the measures which his Majesty's ministers had taken, and seemed still inclined to pursue. When the first Report, brought up from the Secret Committee, was presented, he opposed the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act grounded thereon, because he conceived the Report did not justify so strong and violent a measure. He was sorry to say, that in like manner he felt himself equally under the necessity of opposing the address proposed, because he could not conceive that the Second Report, any more than the First, could justify the proceedings. He was certainly ready to admit, that in the Second Report there was something like an appearance of sedition; nay, there were some acts stated, which, if true, approached very nearly to what might be termed treasonable. But he could not be brought to approve of the mode in which these several statements were printed. He reprobated, and he said he ever should do, the mode of selecting partial extracts from letters of individuals, and books of Societies, and making them charges and accusations against particular persons, as it implied a doubt of the effect; nor could he think the mode of printing certain words and passages in capitals and italics altogether fair, as if doubtful of a fair appeal to cool and unbiassed judgment in its decision, but endeavouring to influence the passions, by pointing out partial views, on which they were to examine the subject. Upon a similar mode of proceeding it was that Algernon Sydney replied to the infamous judge before whom he was tried, "That if quotations were suffered to be so mangled and disguised to answer party purposes, he would prove, from the Bible itself, that there was no God." Thus it was in the present instance; this method of partial printing might tend to influence the minds, if not of that House, perhaps of those courts of justice before whom the present objects of persecution were about to appear. Partial extracts, unaccompanied with any *overt act*, Mr. Lambton contended, would not be admitted as criminal evidence in any court of justice, and were inadequate to substantiate any charge of treason; what, therefore, would

not be admissible evidence in any court of justice, ought not, consistently with the principle of justice, to be admitted in that House. When he looked at the present Report, garbled as it was, Mr. Lambton confessed, he could not but feel an inclination to see how a Report thus conducted would appear, of the proceedings of a Society, in which the Right Hon. Gentleman opposite to him (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) had taken so active a part; or another Society, the York Association, of which his friend, the Rev. Mr. Wyvil, was so conspicuous a member; or he should like to see the letter written by his Grace the Duke of Richmond so garbled; and he had no doubt but that in them would be found expressions, at least equally strong, if not as treasonable, as those of the present day. There was likewise another publication which he had by accident laid his hands upon; he meant the Address to the People of England, by Mr. Northcote, in which he read passages that alluded to three or four royal robbers, who considered blows as sometimes better than words, and others of a like tendency. In the late administration of Lord North, such a garbling of testimony upon any subject would neither have been attempted nor borne; and to support this assertion, Mr. Lambton read some extracts from a publication of the Rev. Mr. Locke, stating, that the fortress of corruption was not to be subdued by a war of tropes and figures, but by hardy blows. This, according to modern interpretation, might have been construed into an excitement to take up arms; yet Lord North, though struggling with the torrent of popular disapprobation, occasioned by the calamities brought on by the American war, had no recourse to measures so violent as those which have characterised the administration of the Right Hon. Gentleman. Mr. Lambton said, Lord North knew he had to deal with men framed of "sterner stuff;" such men as Saville and Rockingham were not to be so treated. With respect to the facts themselves, as stated in the Report, upon which the present motion was grounded, he could not avoid a few comments. In the very beginning of the Report, the circumstances attending the supposed conspiracy were stated to be extravagant. If, by this term, it was meant to state them absurd and impossible, how could the minister justify the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act upon the supposition of danger? if, on the other hand, by the term it was meant to call them wild and extravagant, whence arose the pains taken throughout the whole of the Report, to prove them regular and systematical?

Another circumstance was worthy remark; while the Committee professed to trace the origin of these conspiracies, how

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was it that they proceeded to state facts which were of a recent date? or why were they thus forced in, out of their natural order of time and place? The certain fact was, that it was supposed that few or none would have patience, or perseverance, to wade through the whole of the voluminous Report: It was therefore thought advisable to drag a few strong facts forwards, out of their natural order of time and place, in order that they might satisfy such as were too indolent to read the whole through.

In the third page of the Report, the plan for providing arms for the purpose of enforcing the designs of the Societies, was termed a general idea; yet directly afterwards it was stated, that the matter was discussed only by a few, and that only when the general meetings were broken up, and a few select members only left behind. Upon the subject of procuring arms much had been said, and what were those arms? Not eighteen thousand, as might have been supposed, but eighteen pike-heads, ten battle-axes, and twenty blades, unfinished. This was the mighty force that was to overthrow the constitution, to annihilate the Parliament, to destroy his Majesty! Meetings were said to have been held at Paisley for the purpose of practising arms; yet at Paisley no arms had been discovered. Why, he asked, did not the Right Hon. Gentleman suppress this formidable conspiracy when he first knew of its existence? What merit was due to a man, who could wink at a petty misdemeanour till it grew up to a felony? who would say, that such an individual could be acting upon the principles of justice? The Right Hon. Gentleman, without having suspended the *Habeas Corpus* Act, without this extraordinary address to his Majesty, had it in his power at any time to have crushed this formidable conspiracy; two regiments would have destroyed it even in its gigantic maturity; but that would not have answered the Right Hon. Gentleman's purposes; in such case, the Right Hon. Gentleman would not have obtained the petty tribute of popularity which was the sole object of his aim. The circumstance of coupling the Society of the Friends of the People with the other Societies, deserved the severest reprehension, and could only be done with the insidious design of defaming them, and lessening them in the eyes of their countrymen. What charge was there attempted to be exhibited against them? Or of what use could they be possibly made in establishing the treasons supposed to exist? If it was said that those letters were found upon Mr. Skirving, then he desired to know why the whole of them were not published, and why they were thus scandalously garbled to answer a particular purpose? If rebellion were

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to rear its head to-morrow, where could it be supposed the other members of that Society would rally but round the constitution? It might be said that a slight scratch might cover the body with sores; he was confident, however, there was no danger to be apprehended from the inoculation in the English, with the pernicious *pus* of French principles. The situation of the two countries was entirely dissimilar: In France, the aristocracy oppressed the poor; in England it was not so. If the aristocracy of this country were to join the Crown for the purpose of oppressing the poor, there might then perhaps be some danger; but the people of this country were too well attached to the constitution to suffer it to be overturned by such wild and extravagant schemes as those stated in the Report. No man would be more forward than he to take up arms in defence of the constitution. He had pledged himself to accord with the measures of Administration, provided they brought forward any evidence to prove that the constitution was in danger. It was his duty, he said, to state that he saw no danger whatever, and, notwithstanding the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act, however unfashionable the language he might make use of, he should, without apprehension, discharge his duty according to his conscience, and in such a manner as he conceived to be most consonant to the interest of those who had sent him to represent them in that House. For these reasons, he disapproved of the address, and should give it his negative.

Serjeant Watfon rose to vindicate the courts of justice from the misrepresentations of the Hon. Gentleman who spoke last. Courts of justice, the Learned Serjeant said, he had no doubt would discharge their duty correctly and faithfully; they would reason upon the inuendoes; they would take into consideration the whole of such seditious papers as should be submitted to their judgment, and decide according to the nature and tendency of the documents before them. Why then should that House proceed in a different manner from that which a court of justice would follow? The Learned Serjeant ridiculed *Mr. Lambton's* idea of waiting till the arms had been increased and distributed, and the conspiracy had acquired a strength and consistency too firm to be resisted. He alluded to the riots in 1780, adverted to the alarming consequences which might result from want of timely prevention, applauded the wisdom of the Committee, and concluded with giving his hearty assent to the motion.

Mr. Robinson confessed himself an alarmist, yet declared he thought it unfair that instances to prove the disaffection of England should be brought from Scotland. He was willing
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to give every degree of credit to the Report of the Committee which it merited, but he really did not think that the business of the arms had been at all clearly made out.

Sir Watkin Lewes declared, that he had never made up his mind upon the propriety of the measures pursued by the minister, until after having carefully read the last Report of the Secret Committee; but that was so strong as to render him, along with others, an alarmist, and that read, he was somewhat surprised that Administration had not taken those strong steps sooner. He owned himself to be a friend to a reform in the representation of the people; but when he found that reform and revolution were synonymous terms, he would rather forego his wishes for the former, than risk the consequences of the latter.

Mr. Alderman Newnham congratulated himself upon the spirit of prophecy with which he had spoken at the commencement of the session. He had early foreseen the mischiefs which had taken place in the country; and spoke his opinion of them, without any expectation from party on either side of the House.

Mr. Martin conceived it to be one of the constitutional privileges of this country, that British subjects might provide themselves with arms, particularly for their defence in case of invasion. He hoped, he said, we were not yet come to that pitch which precluded us from expressing our sentiments, however erroneous those sentiments might be. He did not conceive that the mere fact of a man's having arms in his possession indicated any act hostile to the constitution; and he saw nothing in the Report, on the subject of arms, that warranted any further inference or deduction, than that some persons had provided themselves with arms for their defence, in case their rights, property, or lives, might be attacked by any others. He might be mistaken; but that was his opinion.

Mr. Burdon observed, that, from the conduct of our brave seamen, it was clear that the heart of this country was as sound as ever: If the intent of these Clubs were not hostile to the constitution, he could not assign any reason why 4000 pikes had been ordered, and he wished to know to what extent that order might be carried? *Mr. Burdon* applauded the wisdom of the Report, and the manner in which it was worded. He was, for his part, no orator, and he lamented that he was not so, that he might express his sentiments with more feeling on the occasion. He had been in hopes, after hearing the First Report, and still more after the Second, that some stronger measure would have been adopted by his Majesty's

jefty's ministers, particularly at that period of the session, or that Parliament would have been kept together in case of any thing dangerous happening during the time for which he now found they were to be prorogued. He hoped, as this was the last debate that probably would take place, that some means would be provided to enable ministers at a short notice to call the House together to give their advice in case of emergency.

Mr. Fox said, he should have been happy, if he could have given his vote in favour of this address. Various associations had certainly been formed; some of them for laudable purposes, and others for purposes perhaps not so laudable. He should have considered the address with more satisfaction, if he had been persuaded that the effects of it on the persons who were its declared objects, would be such as Gentlemen who supported it seemed to expect. With regard to the persons who had formed themselves into associations with views more or less laudable, as far as their views were to be judged of from their original professions, it could not be suspected that he had any partiality to influence his opinion. Partiality could be derived only from a general concurrence of sentiment, favour shewn, or support received. Those persons, however, among many other important instances of signalizing themselves, had always been distinguished as his personal and political enemies. They were also, the greater part of them, the very persons who had supported that system of power against which he had always contended; they were the persons who had at all times, till very lately, supported the present minister; who had lent their utmost aid to bring him into power; and who, by their present conduct in opposition to him, contributed more to promote his measures than by their former support. In the discussion of public questions, much as he regretted when it was his misfortune to differ from those with whom he had the happiness of having long lived in habits of intimacy, or generally agreed on constitutional principles, he was not to be governed by personal feelings or political kindness. He was not then to debate whether or not there were some persons who entertained principles and favoured designs hostile to the established Government of the country. At all times there had been such persons, and ever would be under any possible system. Was it not notorious, that, during the reigns of the two first Princes of the House of Brunswick, there existed, not a few inconsiderable persons, but a party of great weight and influence from numbers, rank, property, and character, not merely entertaining, but actively prosecuting, designs hostile to the Protestant succession as established in that

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that House? But had the best bulwarks of the constitution, and the most valuable defences of our rights, been suspended on that account? No; the good sense of the people at large, and their obvious and avowed attachment to a system, the practical effect of which they felt to be the promotion of their happiness, rendered fruitless the systematic hostility of that party. On the decline of that party, by whatever name it might be called, other disaffected persons, with the same, or perhaps other, views, naturally arose. How this new party acted in 1784, it was unnecessary for him to mention. Gentlemen could not but know, that the system of vilifying Parliament, so successfully pursued at that period, must have produced a very great effect, and perhaps been the immediate cause of all those proceedings which they were called upon to repress by such extraordinary measures as were suggested at present. The question to be debated was not the existence of disaffected persons, but whether what they did was sufficient to call for or warrant a departure from the ordinary course of administering the Government. Were not the laws against seditious or treasonable practices in full force? and was not the general disposition of the people loyal and zealous to support the constitution? What more was necessary?

The French, by their abuse of liberty, had brought liberty itself into disrepute; he therefore warned the House against the fatal error of bringing the constitution into contempt with the people, by teaching them, that it was of itself inadequate to any emergency, that it possessed not vigour to oppose the least attack, that it held forth the semblance, and not the substance, of protection. In discussing questions of war or alliances, they were told, that it was the prerogative of the Crown to declare war and conclude treaties, and that Parliament was not to interfere with the exercise of that prerogative, but to punish ministers in case they abused it. Was it not equally the prerogative and the duty of the Crown to punish all attempts against the constitution by the regular course of law, and the province of Parliament to animadvert on ministers if they neglected or betrayed that duty? No reason could be alledged for deviating from the ordinary mode in the one case more than in the other. Why then were they called upon to take the lead, and give a previous sanction to measures, which it was their duty only to superintend, to controul, and to check, if they appeared to be inexpedient or improper? What, after all, was expected from their address? Professions of loyalty. Surely, surely, the House of Commons had better means of manifesting their loyalty than by professions. Professions they had already given in abundance, and they were

not in this instance to give material advice; they were only called upon to witness facts, to affirm their belief of the existence of a conspiracy, which were already in issue on the trials of the persons committed as accomplices in that conspiracy. Was it for the purpose of expressing their loyalty that that address was to be voted? Certainly not! Was it for the purpose of advice? No such thing! It was a re-conveyance from that House to the Crown, whereby the House was made to volunteer as a witness of their own accusation! The Secret Committee were to represent their belief of the facts, and were brought by that means to give evidence upon these facts, upon grounds as infamous, perhaps, as those which influenced the trial of Mr. Walker of Manchester. Thus was that House founding the trumpet of alarm throughout the country louder than was ever done in any former instance, at any former period. The papers in the Report on which the address was founded, were many of them the composition of ministers: Of the authenticity of such papers, neither the House nor the Secret Committee had any knowledge of their own. The effect of the address could only be to publish the opinion of the House, that the constitution was in danger.

He had flattered himself, that the day on which they had voted thanks for a great and glorious victory, achieved by the united zeal and valour of every officer and seaman in our fleet, would not have been chosen as the day to sound alarm. That victory, he trusted, would have banished every idea of invasion from the enemy, the only circumstance that could give colour to danger from disaffected persons at home; and he had hoped that Lord Howe had not only conquered the French fleet, but re-conquered the *Habeas Corpus* Act. Although the cause of alarm was gone, the effect, however, still remained. What were the numbers of those persons from whom so much was dreaded, and what their quantity of arms, even as stated in the Report? Too insignificant surely to act by open force. But they talked of a Convention. What was the magical influence of that word, that, if any set of people were to meet, and call themselves a Convention, the whole nation must be undone? Were they to form their Convention, and attempt to exercise any authority contrary to law, the nearest justice of peace, he was fully convinced, as he had stated in a former debate, might easily disperse them. Their conversations about arms too it appeared were all private. They were not held in their public meetings, but by a few persons after the other members were gone. They did not venture to trust the secret of providing arms even with those whom they expected to use them. The people, he believed, who had thus associated,

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were not discontented in general with the Government of this country, but with the administration of that Government. Yet it had been misrepresented, as if, instead of preferring a better to a worse administration of Government, their discontents had been levelled against all governors whatever. Who were those men against whom these extraordinary efforts were directed? Were they formidable from their numbers, their property, or their character? It evidently appeared, that they had no connexion with France, nor had been aided by French money: It was equally clear, that they were not connected with any party in this country.

Between the former state of France, said Mr. Fox, and the state of this country, there was as little resemblance as between what had happened there and what was apprehended here. There was not in this country that wide separation of rich and poor, without any intermediate class, which too generally prevailed in France. The revolution in France was not begun by the lower and inconsiderable orders of the people. It was an assembly, uniting in it much of the rank and property, and perhaps the greater part of the talents, of the kingdom, that commenced the French revolution, and overturned the ancient government. Such men as composed some of the dreaded Societies in this country, had risen to power in the progress of that revolution, but they were utterly incapable of beginning it. He was glad to find that more stress was laid in the Report on what had been discovered in Scotland, than on the discoveries made in England; both on account of the natural predilection which every man felt for the part of the country in which he was born, and because it was a complete answer to the desperate proposition with which the House had been threatened, of introducing the Scots laws into England. Under the mild system of English law, so effectual had experience proved it to be, that proofs of sedition were hardly to be found; under the rigorous system of Scots law, still existing in full force, sedition had grown up, and ripened into rebellion. Such was the fair inference from the Report; and the converse of the argument might be also true. The rigour of the Scots law might have tended to raise sedition. Might not there be many men in Scotland who, like himself, would feel but little interested in preserving a system of government under which they should be exposed to such treatment as appeared in the cases of Muir and Palmer? In such discussions as were necessarily occasioned by the late proceedings in Parliament there might be much mischief. In attachment to the constitution, he would not yield to any man; he was however attached to the substance and vital spirit, not merely to the form.

form. The substance and vital spirit was political freedom. A Convention, and resistance to the form in favour of the spirit of the constitution, had rescued our ancestors from impending slavery, and seated the House of Brunswick on the throne. It was the right of the people to meet; it was their right to discuss their private or political affairs. These rights were sacred, and essential to freedom. If they were invaded and suppressed, the constitution might be reduced, without a struggle, to a level with those of other countries, which, perhaps, once resembled our own, and of which the forms had not long survived the substance. He was therefore sorry when he saw the people called from that attention which they ought always to pay to the Administration of the Government, to alarms for the existence of the Government itself: And he believed the old faction he had mentioned in a former debate, by whatever name described, had uniformly pursued the same plan of throwing all power into the hands of the Crown, and spreading a false alarm of danger from one quarter to cover a real danger from another.

Of Conventions, as a general term, Mr. Fox said, he should only observe, that they might be innocent; they might be even meritorious. It was the sacred and undoubted right of the people of this country to assemble, and to give their opinion on grievances properly alledged. If that right was withheld or denied, the constitution of this country might gradually sink into ruin, without one blow being struck. He was sorry that ground so general was taken in the present debate, and that the attention of the House and the People should be diverted from topics, if not more important, at least more immediate. It was, in his opinion, the work of the old Tory faction in this country to raise an alarm, and to exhibit, as a weapon of danger, the only constitutional means which could be resorted to in cases of extremity. A case might be supposed in which it would be the duty of the people, assembled by their delegates in Convention, to call upon Parliament to do what Parliament would not do of itself. Was it not then the height of madness to blunt the weapons, and discredit the means, to which Parliament must resort in such an emergency? He would not quote the resistance made to King James, as an example to prove that the Prince on the throne might at any time be resisted. How then, it would be asked, was the obedience of the disaffected to be secured? The law had provided for the punishment of the disaffected, whenever disaffection shewed itself in any of their acts. That was the proper means of prevention; and the true answer to all that had been said about suffering the mischief to grow to a head. To

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To put the law in force, was it necessary for the House to declare that they believed in the existence of a conspiracy against the Government on evidence which they should have been ashamed to listen to? At the Lancaster assizes, Mr. Walker, and other persons, were charged with a conspiracy, which, if true, would have amounted to treason. The evidence, it was feared, would not be sufficient to make out the charge of treason; but on the principle adopted under some of the Stuarts, it was thought that it might be sufficient for a charge of a less heinous nature, and they were indicted for sedition. The only witness, when he came to be examined, was such a witness that the counsel for the prosecution themselves were ashamed of him; they confessed their own feelings on the occasion, and the defendants were honourably acquitted. Had Parliament before that trial declared their belief in the conspiracy with which those gentlemen were charged, a jury, prejudiced and misled by such a declaration, might have found a verdict of Guilty, on the testimony of a witness, who, in the common course of law, was held to be unworthy of any credit. Much horror and remorse, he conceived, must those who advised the prosecution have felt in such a case; and although they might have obtained a remission of the sentence, they could not have repaired the injury done to the defendants. For these reasons he objected to that part of the address which declared the belief of the House in the conspiracy, and should move to leave it out. He objected also to the declarations of loyalty as unnecessary, but should not vote against them.

An argument had been urged to which he should not attempt an answer, *viz.* that the Second Report from the Secret Committee being stronger than the first, the second, by the rule of three, would justify a stronger measure; and the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act having been voted on the first, there could be no objection to voting an address, something not so strong, upon the second. This mode of reasoning, though very disputable in logic, was conclusive in numbers, and therefore he should not divide the House on the amendment which he meant to propose. The party who governed France at present had usurped their power, and still maintained it, by the alarm of numerous royalists existing in that country, an alarm as false as the alarm of numerous republicans in England. The principle in both cases was the same. By propagating the alarm of republicans here, ministers obtained powers that would not have been granted, and drew around them the support of persons who would not have voted for their measures under any other circumstances. He should not cast any blame on the present prosecutions, nor against any other

other that may be found necessary. He wished the minister in these cases to *use* the law, but not to *abuse* it. He saw things in both countries with vulgar optics; in England, a general and steady spirit of royalty, from a sense of the blessings derived from a limited monarchy; and in France, a general and desperate spirit of republicanism, from a recollection of the oppression suffered under despotism.

Ministers, to gain supporters in carrying on the war, wished to reverse the picture, and make the House believe that France was full of royalists, and England of republicans. If that alarm were not kept up, the people would attend to the policy and the conduct of the war; they might even think that the war ought not to be persisted in; or, if we could not get out of it, that it ought to be directed by abler hands. From all these considerations, it was the obvious interest of ministers to divert them as long as possible. Were there among the persons, from whom danger was apprehended, any considerable number of men of rank or property? Was it pretended, in the Report, that they had since the war any correspondence with the French? Were they connected with any faction in the state? If they were to burst into the House of Commons, it would be indifferent to them, whether they turned to the right or to the left, whether Ministers or Opposition were their first victims. Such men might possibly rise in a revolution, but could never create one. In the advice he then gave, he must be admitted to be disinterested, for it would hardly be imagined that he should wish to go to the *guillotine* merely for the sake of being accompanied by the Gentlemen over against him. The prosecutions ought to proceed, because they had commenced; but it was not therefore necessary that Parliament, as had been suggested, should be kept sitting, to echo back the information received from the Privy Council. Rash, and even seditious, conversation, he supposed, would be proved; but he trusted no man would be found so far to have forgotten his duty to his country as to have embarked in treason. At all events, the trials would be conducted, and the punishments awarded, with the dignity and humanity of British justice; and the examples, in his opinion, strike with greater force without any previous declaration by Parliament. In countries where the act of taking off a few individuals might tend to overturn the government, a few individuals, however obscure, might effect a revolution; but in such a country as this, where the revolution must be popular to have the most distant chance of success, nothing could be more irrational than the attempt. Suppose such persons mad enough to attempt it, the danger would be contemptible to all but themselves, and they might be

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be pronounced fitter for Bedlam than Newgate. This argument, however, applied only to the present time: For if ministers were to persist in this ruinous war; if the exploded maxims of divine right were to be revived; if the dearest parts of the constitution were to give way one after another to the convenience or caprice of the government of the day; if the very name of Liberty was to be degraded in this country; if the people should be driven into such a situation, as to be of opinion, that no change could place them in a worse situation; a conspiracy would then wear indeed a serious aspect. In that case measures like the present must prove decidedly ineffectual. What then did he recommend? to study the peace and prosperity of the people; to hold out to them, not the unsubstantial theory, but the practical benefits of the constitution; to shew that the first wish of the Government was the real happiness of the people; to put an end to the war, and to inspire them with a love for the constitution, by exhibiting it in its native purity. To shew them that liberty was as consistent with order, as order with liberty; and that the constitution, with all its restrictions on the Executive Power, the most valuable part of it, in his opinion, was sufficient for all the purposes of just subordination. This he might be told would be a degradation, and a compromise with a set of low and desperate men. In his opinion, it would not be a compromise, but a defeat. With disaffected persons he proposed no compromise. He was not so wild a speculatist, as to believe that any government could satisfy every one of those who lived under it; his advice was only to render the number of the discontented as small as possible, by removing as many as possible of the causes of discontent. Let all civil distinctions on account of religious opinion be abolished. Let dissenters find equal protection and equal encouragement. Let the rights of neutral nations also be respected, more especially the rights of America, so intimately connected with us by common language and common interest. If *ut ameris amabilis esto* were a sound maxim in philosophy, though used on a slight occasion—if the great body of men, who were supposed to be adverse to the constitution, should be made to experience an equal protection from the laws, and an equal interest in the welfare of the country; then the small body of men who might wish for a revolution in this realm, would stand at once insulated and disavowed. They might be confined if their efforts were thought dangerous; if not, they would be scouted from society.—Such were, in his opinion, the means, and the only means, to secure liberty and happiness to this country. Mr. Fox concluded with moving, as an amendment, to leave out all the part of the address which
declared

declared the belief of the House in a conspiracy against the constitution.

Sir William Dolben said, that if the amendment, proposed by the Right Hon. Gentleman, was adopted, the whole proceedings of the House and the Committee would be rendered truly ridiculous; that the omission he proposed would leave out the marrow and cream of the Report. *Sir William* declared himself to be of opinion, that the prosecutions against the Revolutionists would be carried on with more propriety and effect by both Houses of Parliament, than by the Executive Government. How any individual in that House could call in question the existence of a conspiracy against the constitution, after the incontrovertible evidence that had been produced, was to him matter of the greatest astonishment. He expressed his fears and apprehensions, that those who did not fear in common with the rest of his Majesty's subjects, must have something to hope which they did not hope in common with him. If an address had been sent from the Commons to the Lords, the House of Lords would not, he was persuaded, insult them by proposing such an omission. If, therefore, the Commons proceeded in a different manner, and altered the address proposed in the other House, we should have a passive obedient King, non-resisting Lords, and a rampant republican House of Commons.

The Attorney General replied to Mr. Fox. He contended, that the arguments of the Right Hon. Gentleman could not be defended upon legal or constitutional grounds, and that the Report contained sufficient evidence to justify and require the steps that had been taken by the Executive Government. He expressed his satisfaction at having heard that the Right Hon. Gentleman opposite did not intend to take the sense of the House on his motion for an amendment. In replying to the speech of the Right Hon. Gentleman, he said, he should confine himself to a very few of the many topics he had introduced *argumenti gratia*. He had asserted, that the object of these reiterated discussions was more to make the House act as a witness, and give evidence to prejudice the trials of the unfortunate men at that time under prosecution, than for the attainment of any substantial good. Was the House then to be deterred from the exercise of its legitimate functions, in a case which originated with the Legislature, and which came peculiarly under its cognizance? It ought not; and he was confident, that when the persons in confinement were put upon their trial, they would experience that justice, moderation, and humanity, which the benign laws of this country had long been in the habit of imparting to the accused.

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accused. The Right Hon. Gentleman had also been pleased to say, that the discontent which pervaded the country was imputable to the severity of Crown prosecutions. By a reference to the Report he would find, that it was the offspring of a *foul conspiracy for the subversion of all order and government*. As to the sentences inflicted on Mr. Muir and others, so much inveighed against, he declared, that if any Society in England had acted in a manner similar to the British Convention in Scotland, upon the evidence exhibited in those papers, he should have thought it his duty to have made the members of it amenable to the laws for high treason. The suspension of the *Habeas Corpus Act*, which had been insisted upon as a violation of the constitution, extended only to persons suspected or accused of treasonable practices. The rest of the subjects of the country had the benefit of that statute to the fullest extent. The Right Hon. Gentleman had expressed his astonishment that so much of magic should attach on the word Convention; and asked, if Gentlemen had forgotten the blessings we derived from a Convention at the æra of the Revolution? No person, the Attorney General contended, could put the assemblies of the present times in competition with the Convention held in 1688, without affixing a gross libel on the glorious Revolution. The present Convention had for its object the annihilation of that constitution which at that period was not indeed invented, but ratified and established by many salutary regulations and enforcements; and he called upon Gentlemen on the other side to point out a single instance of a similarity in principles, that had been adopted in common by those who conducted the Revolution and the modern reformers. The one was anxious to preserve the constitution, to fix and limit the prerogatives of the Crown, and to assert and maintain the privileges of the people—while the other wished to subvert the constitution, to destroy the Monarch, and under the name of Liberty to tyrannize over the people.

The Attorney General next commented on the proceedings of the Society of the Friends of the People, and that of the Liberty of the Press; both of which he considered of a very dangerous tendency, on account of the persons of rank and influence that composed them. The former, he said, had shewn some symptoms of affiliating with the others, but professed only to go to a certain length, as appeared from the letter of the Corresponding Society, soliciting their co-operation, and the sentiments of the Friends of the People in return. Among the Society of the Friends of the People, though there were many very honourable characters in it, yet he owned he disapproved of that Society entirely; and though

they said that they had explicitly made known their views and intentions, he must say it was not easy to find out what they were. The Society of the Liberty of the Press had been more audacious, and, by applauding the patriotic sentiments of counsel, and the conduct of persons after conviction, attempted to palsify the hand of the public accuser.

With regard to the Dissenters, he said, that he was convinced every moderate and honest man amongst them would disapprove of the conduct of these Societies, and support and approve of the conduct of Administration, as necessary to the security and protection of their lives, liberties, and properties, as to those of every other class of his Majesty's subjects. With respect to the subject of Lord Howe's victory, he professed himself so stupid as not to perceive its application to the question before the House. That because Lord Howe had been victorious, we should discontinue the war, and *ergo* omit so much of the address, seemed to be the argument used by the Hon. Gentleman, which to him did not appear to be a very logical one. The part the Right Hon. Gentleman had proposed to omit, contained the very substance and essence of the address; without it the address meant nothing. With regard to the House being a witness on these affairs, he conceived it would be no more a witness than was consistent with propriety; it was no uncommon thing to see that House call for the prosecution of an individual. He deprecated the mode in which the law officers of the Crown were constantly treated with regard to criminal prosecutions. If they forbore to prosecute, they were accused of neglecting their duty; if they prosecuted, Societies, particularly that for the Freedom of the Press, voted thanks to those who opposed them, and gave them every support. He concluded by observing, that prevention was preferable to cure. To illustrate this position, he called to the recollection of the House the enormities that were committed in 1780, and desired to know, whether it would not have contributed more to the public safety and tranquillity, had the then existing government prevented the assembling of 40,000 men, than to have remained in a state of shameful inactivity, till the metropolis was threatened with destruction, till riot and disorder had actually taken place, and the Government was in the most imminent danger? By the seasonable interposition of the magistracy, the streets would not have been drenched with blood, and so many of our fellow-subjects would not have made a sad and solemn *exit* on the gallows. To prevent a repetition of those enormities, had the measures of which the proposed address was an essential one been suggested, and as he was convinced of their urgent necessity,

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sity, the Attorney General said he would vote for the address in its original state.

Mr. Fox explained, and disavowed having said that the Dissenters were more connected with those Societies than others, by repeating the words he had used in his former speech; and, in answer to an Hon. Baronet's insinuation, declared, that, in his public and private conduct, he was actuated solely by affection for the constitution, and that zeal for the good of his country, which neither hope nor fear should influence him to suppress.

Mr. Thompson defended the general conduct of the Society for Constitutional Information, insisted that the proceedings of that Society had been unfairly represented by the Committee, and called upon any person present to point out any thing like sedition or treason in their proceedings. He wished to know from ministers, with regard to a letter Mr. Frost had been ordered to draw up by the Society, if they were in possession of the original; or if they had not produced, as the hand-writing of Mr. Frost, the mutilated extract of a mutilated copy, as the hand-writing and original of Mr. Frost, which he denied in the strongest terms before the Privy Council. He fully vindicated his own conduct with regard to the Society in all its proceedings.

Mr. Dent quoted the address of the Society for Constitutional Information to the National Assembly, every second line of which he contended to be a seditious, if not a treasonable libel; and he expressed his surprise, that any Member of that House would avow himself a member of such a body.

Mr. Loveden stated, that he was conscious very improper proceedings were practised by the London Societies and their emissaries. He had just come from a distant part of the country where there was a camp; one of those emissaries, who had been distributing very improper and inflammatory hand-bills, said he knew very well how far he could go without being in danger, for he had been instructed; and, on the King's birth-day, declared, it was the last time they would have to drink his health in that way; and shewing a piece of coin, said, pointing to the King's head, that it would not long be there.—The man he alluded to, *Mr. Loveden* said, had been a waiter at the Crown and Anchor.

Mr. Thompson observed, that his having been a waiter at the Crown and Anchor, did not connect him with the Society for Constitutional Information. It was to be recollected that Mr. Reeves's Association was held at the Crown and Anchor, and the waiter might as justly be supposed to be connected with that as any other Society.

Mr. Lambton desired to know, whether the Hon. Member had taken up this man for sedition? but no answer was given.

Mr. Wharton rose to give his assent to the motion, because, from what he had seen in the Report, he thought the proceedings of those Societies warranted the measures that had been taken. He had belonged to one of those Societies himself, and it was therefore with reluctance hitherto that he could condemn its proceedings, because he had never known them to be improper. He had been at only one meeting, and there he was sure nothing wrong nor unconstitutional had appeared in their proceedings, otherwise he would have objected to it at the time. He now had seen enough to convince him that it was his duty to come forward with a declaration that he totally disapproved their conduct, and therefore he could not give his negative to the present motion.

The question was put upon *Mr. Fox's* amendment, which was negatived without a division.—The address was then put and carried.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

TUESDAY, June 17.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer brought up the address of their Lordships, in which the Commons had concurred, and presented it at the bar of the House.

ATTORNEYS.

The Earl of Abingdon rose, and said, "My Lords, having some matter of much importance to state to the House, and understanding that this is the last day of business before the session is to be at an end, I hope your Lordships will, for this reason, and because I wish to be perfectly accurate in my statement, indulge me with having recourse to my papers.

"It being my intention to bring forward, in the course of the next session of Parliament, some Resolutions, I trust, for the adoption of this House, I now rise to give your Lordships notice of this; I do so for the reason, that, by stating briefly what the objects of those resolutions are, your Lordships' attention may, during the recess of Parliament, be drawn to the weight and importance of the subject.

"Enemy as I am, my Lords, and no one has been, or is more so, to those theories of reform, which quixotism, ambition, party spirit, or any spirit but true public spirit, have contrived to puzzle and mislead the people with; there is one species

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species of *practical* Reform, which, in professing myself to be the friend of, it is under the circumstance of knowing that there is, within these walls, as well as without them, but one mind and one sentiment upon the occasion. It is a Reform, my Lords, which the Judges of the land, of that *heavenly* attribute of justice which so ornamentally and conspicuously belongs to them, have all called out for, and are so much to their dignity and honour lending their assistance to obtain. It is a Reform which Parliament itself has already begun to look to. It is a Reform which the liberty and property of the subject cry out for, demand, and must have.

"And having said this, I dare say your Lordships already anticipate me in knowing that the Reform I allude to, is that of those locusts in the law, the *pettifogging* attornies of this country; who, like the *locusts* in Africa (and, as it is said of them), 'fall like a cloud upon the earth, and eat up every thing they meet with.'

"This is the Reform in which I take pride to myself in the appellation of a Reformer, in which I assume credit to myself, as being not what is so called, but what is truly so, 'The Friend of the People;' and in which, suffering as I have done, under the inordinate sanction of these absorbing animals, I am, perhaps, as well qualified for the task of this Reform as any one can be.

"My Lords, this is a grave and weighty subject; it is a subject that comes home to the feelings, because it comes home to the very doors of every one of your Lordships; for which of your Lordships is it, that is a stranger to its effects? The greater, the higher, the richer you are, the more prone are you to its consequences, and the surer of becoming, sooner or later, the victims of its all-devouring avarice. What many of your Lordships are, I was; what I am, without timely interference, your Lordships may, your Lordships will be. It is a subject therefore, not only for your Lordships' own sakes, and for the sake of the community at large, but because it is a subject under the pressure of which I now stand in your Lordships' presence, that I, as a Member of this House, am led to invoke the aid, and to excite the endeavours of your Lordships, in assisting me to stop the progress of this growing evil; the evil of all others, perhaps the very only one in the State, most assuredly the most crying evil in the State, that calls for and requires reform.

"My Lords, my case is a hard one indeed; and I will state it in a few words to your Lordships, because I am made to suffer the injury without being able to obtain either remedy or redress,

redress, which surely does not belong to the justice of this country."

[We forbear to insert the remainder of the Earl's speech, as criminal proceedings have been instituted in the Court of King's Bench against his Lordship on the ground of his having authorised the publication of a libel.]

Mr. Harris, the surgeon attending upon the constable who was run over in Palace-yard, was examined at the bar, and stated, that his patient's life was out of all danger.

The Earl of Lauderdale moved, "That a Committee be appointed to examine the buildings, &c. contiguous to the House, for the purpose of giving directions to render the House more commodious to its Members."—Ordered.

THANKS TO LORD HOOD.

The order of the day being read,

Lord Grenville rose, according to the notice he had a few days since had the honour of giving to their Lordships, to move the Thanks of the House to Lord Hood, for the distinguished services he had rendered to his country. His Lordship said, it was a circumstance highly gratifying to his feelings, and must afford equal pleasure to every Lord in the House, that he should have been called to discharge the pleasing duty of moving the thanks of the House to the several admirals upon the three great stations, viz. the Channel, the West Indies, and the Mediterranean. In the course of his address to the House, his Lordship observed, it would be unnecessary for him to enter into any general detail of the conduct of the Noble Lord who was the object of his motion, because, down to a late period of it, the sense of the House had been expressed on that subject in their address to the Throne. There were three general heads under which the conduct of the Noble Admiral might be presented to their Lordships' view, in all of which he was entitled to the highest praise: In the West Indies, at Toulon, and in the Mediterranean. On each of these his Lordship slightly touched; and after bestowing warm eulogiums on them separately, highly praising the capture of Bastia, and other parts of Corsica, he said, that, for valour, for skill, judgment, and for attachment to the success of his Majesty's arms, Lord Hood was highly eminent. He had no doubt their Lordships were impressed with the same sentiments, and therefore he conceived they would concur with him in thinking it proper, to render their proceedings more complete, that the House should express their approbation of the conduct of the commander of the naval department in the Mediterranean,

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nean, as they had previously done to the several commanders on the other stations. Upon that consideration, he should conclude by making a motion, in which he hoped to meet with the unanimous consent of their Lordships, which was, "That the thanks of the House be given to Admiral Lord Hood, for his gallant conduct in the expedition to the island of Corfica." After which he should move, "That the House does highly approve of and acknowledge the behaviour of the officers, seamen and marines serving under Lord Hood; and that the Chancellor do communicate the thanks to Admiral Lord Hood."

The Earl of Lauderdale declared he rose with concern to oppose a motion of that nature. It was extremely unpleasant to him to say any thing in opposition to a motion for thanking any officers in the service of his Majesty; but the high esteem he had for the service, and the value he thought every officer in it ought to have for the thanks of the House, compelled him to oppose the present proposition. He believed it to be the first instance, and sorry he was to find himself compelled to object to the vote of thanks proposed, as it must necessarily appear to convey reflection on the person designed to be made the subject of the motion. Notwithstanding the dilemma, however, to which he was reduced, he should persist in his attempt to preserve that propriety which it concerned the House to maintain; although he persevered in that attempt, he begged leave, however, to disclaim every motive of a personal nature. The thanks of the two Houses were the only honour that the Houses of Parliament could bestow, and therefore ought not to be given but on good grounds, and after undeniable proof of great and highly meritorious services. He could not refrain from noticing the extreme caution and reserve with which the motion was offered to their Lordships, as it demonstrated the doubts which the ministers must have themselves entertained of its propriety. They had taken special care not to enter into any detail, and solely contented themselves with expressing a desire to return thanks to all the officers in the naval department before the session closed. He had not heard any thing advanced by the Noble Secretary of State, that tended in the least degree to support his motion. Toulon had been glanced at, as a subject on which the Noble Admiral might be said to have acted in a manner that did him honour. So much to the contrary did that point appear to him, that, throughout the whole of that transaction, he could not perceive that any credit accrued to this country from the conduct of the Noble Admiral. His Lordship entered into a summary of the circumstances of the taking of the town, and the

the manner of abandoning it to the fury of its enemies, all of which, he maintained, were unfavourable to the British name; and therefore the Noble Admiral should not be thanked on that account. The last man in that House who ought to thank Lord Hood for his conduct at Toulon, was the Noble Secretary of State, for the conduct of that Noble Admiral had been a contradiction to the late language of the Noble Secretary. In talking of the object of the present war, the Noble Admiral had declared to the inhabitants of Toulon, that he intended to secure to them the constitution of 1789; the language of the Noble Secretary of State was, that the object of the war at present was, that of restoring the old government of France; therefore the motion came very improperly from the Noble Secretary of State. His Lordship maintained, that if any praise was due to the Noble Admiral, he ought long ago to have received it; and the bringing this point forward looked as if ministers thought the recent merit of the Noble Admiral much too slight to deserve their Lordships' thanks without the aid of other services. His Lordship maintained that there was no ground whatever for the motion. He declared he felt himself the more inclined to make these observations, when he considered the nature of their Lordships' thanks;—they were, as he had before hinted, the highest praise any officer could have, and being so, they should be chastely and rarely bestowed;—reserved for the most important occasions, and not thrown away upon trifles, for that would diminish their value. The thanks of the House had been rightly voted to Sir Charles Grey and Sir John Jervis for their capture of the West India islands, and so were the thanks rightly voted to Lord Howe the other day, for his signal victory; a victory so glorious to the country. Lord Hood's services were not to be compared to either. What were his services? He had taken Toulon under conditions, and been guilty of a breach of his promise; at Corsica they all knew there had been a violent disunion between the land and the sea service, and his long labours there had ended in the capture of Bastia. The Noble Secretary of State had mentioned Toulon, but he had not much relied on it. There was good reason why; he knew it to be an inglorious transaction in the eyes of Englishmen, and that it would not bear out his motion. With regard to the affair at Corsica, Lord Hood had attacked a windmill with great injury to two seventy-fours, although the uselessness of the object was notorious. After this, how could Sir Charles Grey and Sir John Jervis estimate the thanks which they had received for their distinguished services? or what could that Noble Earl, to whom they were so unanimously voted on a former day, imagine, when

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when this last and greatest honour awaited such a trifling achievement as that of Bastia? If Lord Hood was thanked for his conduct at Bastia, the thanks of their Lordships would be less favourably felt by Lord Howe; and he wished to know what man in the kingdom would be disposed to consider these two admirals entitled to the same reward, the same distinction, the same honour from that House, and the same gratitude from the Public? and yet this would be the effect of passing the present motion. He felt himself, under all the points of view in which he saw this subject, bound in duty to the service in general, and to Lord Howe in particular, to that House and to the Public, to dissent from the present motion.

Lord Grenville declared himself to be both sorry and surprised at the Noble Earl's opposition to the motion which he had the honour to offer to their Lordships on the present occasion. He had indeed heard it was to be opposed, but he could not conceive on what ground. He would not go into the affair of Toulon, as it had been spoken of by his Majesty in his speech from the throne. The Noble Earl well knew that it had been fully discussed on the first day of the session, he chose however to bring it up once more before the session ended. He should still maintain that Lord Hood's services in the Mediterranean were of great importance. The French, from their geographical situation, had two harbours of infinite consideration, as ports and places of equipment during a war, Toulon and Brest. It therefore necessarily became the policy of this country to prevent their having recourse to that advantage; and Lord Hood had done it effectually with regard to Toulon. With respect to the capitulation, he had always understood that the conditions of a treaty were to be made good, as far as the contracting parties had it in their power to make them good, farther it was not in possibility to go. His Lordship mentioned the great use of Corsica as a fit place for carrying French prisoners to. If they had been sent home to Great Britain, it would have cost the country a large expence, and we had already as many prisoners as we could admit with convenience, or provide accommodation for. He said, it gave him concern to hear of any difference that might have prevailed between the two services, rendered a subject of discussion in that House; and that was the first time it had ever been attempted by any Noble Lord. It could do no good, and might widen the breach, and produce mischievous consequences. Sure he was that officers in general thought too justly to be meanly jealous of other officers individually receiving the thanks of Parliament, and that they were not extremely prone to draw a distinction between the nature of their services, or the degree

of estimation differently due to each. In an extensive war the services of different officers must necessarily and unavoidably be different in their measure and degree; but when each were obviously important and the result of zeal, talents, and bravery, they deserved the thanks of that House, which the Earl had well said was the only honour and the only instance of gratitude that House could bestow. For these reasons it was impossible to make any distinction. With respect to that part of the observations of the Noble Earl which related to the object of the present war, he must say a few words. The Noble Earl conceived that it was the object of his Majesty's ministers to restore the ancient government of France, and this he seemed to think their sole object. He had uniformly stated, notwithstanding a great deal of industry had been employed to impress a contrary idea, that the object of the war was what he considered ought to be the object of every war—*peace—honourable, secure, permanent peace*, which could only be obtained by conquering the enemy, and restoring the government of France to a system of law, order, religion, and morality, without which there could be no security for this country. We might, indeed, without this, have the name of peace; but in reality we should have a war the most expensive and destructive in which this country ever was engaged.

Lord Grenville declared he was obliged to say a few more words. The Noble Earl had said, we were embarrassed with French prisoners. Had he forgot the nature of the war? In all former wars with civilized nations, cartels for exchange of prisoners were settled from time to time; whereas no cartels were agreed to in the present war; and upon the principles on which the French chose to carry on the war, they were not likely to be obtained. Colonel Villette, his Lordship said, was undeniably a meritorious officer; but he had acted under Lord Hood as a part of his force, and consequently was thanked in the general thanks to officers. His Lordship enlarged on the good effect of Lord Hood's service in the Mediterranean, and answered the Earl's complaint that he was not in junction with Earl Howe in the Channel, by shewing, that in that case our commerce in the Mediterranean and the adjacent seas would have been most dangerously exposed to the enemy. In reply to the observations made on the Corsican capitulation, he informed the Noble Lord, that no other expedient could be suggested than that of landing the garrison at Toulon. To retain them in Corsica would be extremely dangerous—to send them to Italy was impossible—and to bring them home would only aggravate that expense and

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The Earl of Derby thought he could put the argument upon such a footing, as would rescue it from personality, or reflection on an absent man, which no one of their Lordships liked to deal in less than he did. He considered the present motion not so much a motion to thank Lord Hood, as a motion from ministers to thank themselves. Upon that ground, he must object to it without imputation of personality; and indeed he could not entertain any prejudice against the Noble Lord, as he had never nourished any pique against the Noble Admiral, with whom he was not personally acquainted; nor was he influenced by any partiality; but he could not agree to the motion before their Lordships, on the reasons that had been urged for it by the Noble Secretary of State; he seemed to put the claim of the Noble Admiral to the thanks of the House chiefly on his merit in taking Bastia. If the taking of this place had indeed been so great a thing for this country, in the opinion of the Noble Secretary of State, why not make an Extraordinary Gazette of it? The Public were not informed of it till two days had elapsed after Government had received the information; instead of which, the Noble Secretary of State gave notice of this motion in a thin House, after the motion for thanks to Lord Howe for his glorious victory, and after a debate of considerable length on the address to his Majesty, and when many Noble Lords had withdrawn from the House; and the attendance that day proved that the subject was not deemed very interesting. He came forward to oppose the motion, because, by his construction, it was designed not so much for a compliment to the Noble Admiral himself, as to the plans of that cabinet under whose auspices he had acted. It was said that the conduct of Lord Hood at Toulon merited praise; that he destroyed fifteen ships of the line of the French there; if that conduct merited the thanks of the House, why was he not thanked on the arrival of the news? Why thank him for his conduct at Toulon on the taking of Bastia? It seemed to him, that after the thanks which were so gloriously deserved by Lord Howe were given to him, ministers wished to shew that all the officers employed had acted alike, and that they would not leave the smallest speck on the glory of the campaign; or else it appeared to be a dexterous manoeuvre of ministers to keep up their patronage to their favourites. The evacuation of Toulon he could never regard without regret. Lord Hood's conduct in that affair, whether directed by any other authority he knew not, so far from being meritorious,

appeared to him to have been reprehensible in the extreme. It had tarnished the lustre of our other conquests, and diminished our reputation. Toulon was delivered by treaty, every article of which it behoved us to observe. How had we observed them? We had violated our faith, both the promise we had made of restoring the constitution of 1789, and the promise to guarantee the fleet. After a few more observations in respect to that affair, the Earl concluded with moving the *previous question*; which would save him from agreeing to a motion that he did not approve, and also from opposing a motion of thanks to any man.

The Duke of Bedford agreed with his Noble Friends (the Earls of Lauderdale and Derby) in their arguments on the subject of the motion, and approved of the motion of his Noble Friend for the *previous question*. The reasoning, however, adopted by the Noble Secretary of State upon this subject did not at all satisfy his mind. The Noble Lord had observed, that as Lord Hood had in reality his conduct approved of at Toulon, on the address of that House in answer to the King's speech, it would be unnecessary to dwell on that point. This was not, in his conception, a fair way of putting the point; for it was well known, that it was a rule to give as little opposition as possible to an address moved in answer to the King's speech on the first day of the session. The conduct of Lord Hood incidentally made part of the subject-matter of that Speech, and it was on that account, and not from the sense their Lordships entertained of the merits of Lord Hood, that the address of the House had been voted and carried to the foot of the Throne; but surely that was very different from a separate vote of thanks. Lord Hood's conduct at Toulon, therefore, could hardly be said to have been discussed at all on the first day of the session. He had heard, his Grace said, of the merit of Lord Hood at Toulon, and the advantage derived to this country by that event. Upon that event he would speak plainly; he considered Lord Hood's conduct at Toulon as disgraceful to the honour of the country, and as tarnishing the lustre of the national character; on these grounds, he had often thought it a fit object for inquiry, and he trusted it would be inquired into, and if any of the blame belonged to our allies in that business, that ought to be made public. His Grace mentioned the breach of the conditions with the Toulonese, in respect to taking the French to Corsica, as it was not stipulated by them, when the town was surrendered, that they should be taken there; the affair at Toulon was also in other respects disgraceful.

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When the Noble Secretary commended the zeal and activity with which Lord Hood had acted, he seemed to forget that St. Fiorenzo, a small place unfortified, was taken early in the year, in February. In May they heard of the capture of Bastia, and with the loss of a very few men; so that three months had elapsed, and then the place was taken at little risk; a clear proof, that if the services had not quarrelled, Bastia would have been taken much earlier. In the mean time, too, the Commander in Chief of the same forces (Sir Robert Dundas) had returned to England; upon what account he knew not, though evidently not upon any charge of misconduct, since he had been promoted to a command upon the continent. From the general disposition of the Corsicans, much more might have been expected; and he did not doubt, but if that cordiality had prevailed which had prevailed elsewhere, much more might have been done. When the Noble Secretary enlarged upon the importance of the conquest, and the difficulty of attaining it, he was at a loss what to determine; for, according to the Gazette (and he was obliged to quote Gazette authority for facts, as he had no other information to rely upon), there were only seven men killed and thirteen wounded; it was evident, therefore, that but very little force was used. His opposition to the present measure, the Duke said, gave him concern, on account of the novelty of it in the proceedings of the House; he did not know that a motion for thanks was ever opposed before; he must, notwithstanding, do his duty; and he begged leave to say, he had no partiality for persons; he would not give his thanks in that House to any man, until he was convinced that thanks were due. This, he confessed, appeared to him to be a sort of panegyric which ministers intended on themselves, to shew the wisdom of their choice. There was no ground for thanking Lord Hood, there was nothing extraordinary in his conduct; and were he in the situation of Lord Hood, he should consider the motion for thanking him for his conduct rather as an insult than a panegyric, and that he should be left to perform something worthy of thanks before he received them. His Grace said he should vote for the *previous question*.

Lord Hawkebury rose to say a few words in reply to the Noble Duke. He declared he was astonished at the opposition attempted against such a motion. It was altogether unprecedented. The Noble Duke had mentioned three grounds of objection: First, that the transactions at Toulon were dishonourable to the national character. He thought of them in a widely different manner. He considered what had passed at Toulon as highly serviceable to the country, and that the
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evacuation of that port had been attended with circumstances extremely advantageous to us as a marine power. The Noble Duke's next objection was, that the thanks to Lord Hood should have been voted earlier; and the third, that he took Bastia with the loss of ten men only. His Lordship said, he regarded these matters in a very different way from that in which the Noble Duke had viewed them; it was the first time he had ever heard it made a subject of complaint against an officer, that he had obtained possession of an important town without much loss of blood, or risque of the lives of his men. He should have thought it a matter highly to the credit of the officers, and to the comfort of every feeling individual. He thought no practice could be more improper than that of weighing exactly the value of every piece of service, or of comparing the services of one officer with those of another. The House had but one way of marking its approbation, and that was by voting its thanks; and the only point for their Lordships to consider was, whether the service performed was of magnitude enough to deserve them? If it was, it was no argument against giving them, to say, that a more splendid, a more important victory had been obtained elsewhere. The Noble Admiral to whom the thanks of the House had that day been proposed to be voted, was well known to possess great zeal and great ability; his long services in the Mediterranean, and the importance of them, especially in the island of Corsica, of which the single post of Calvi only remained to be subdued, amply entitled him, in his judgment, to the thanks of their Lordships and to the gratitude of his country; he should therefore vote for the original motion.

The Earl of Lauderdale rose to notice what had fallen from the Noble Secretary of State. That the opposition to such a motion was singular in itself and unprecedented, was true, and a clear proof that such a motion ought to have been made. If the capitulation of Bastia was supposed to expedite the restoration of that government in France, which he suspected our Administration proposed, there was the strangest inconsistency and misconduct he ever witnessed, and consequently the thanks of that House were not due. When Toulon was surrendered to Lord Hood by treaty, he accepted it upon the promise of restoring the constitution of 1789; whereas it was now discovered that nothing less than the complete regeneration of the old monarchy could satisfy us, or secure a permanent and happy peace. At Corsica, the same inconsistency was apparent; for why did Lord Hood agree to send back that garrison to France, which could only serve to re-invigorate our enemy, and render the obstacles to our pursuit more

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irresistible? The whole of the conduct in the Mediterranean was of the same tenor, and it was in vain the Noble Secretary endeavoured to make it palatable. When Sir Charles Grey and Sir John Jervis had conquered Martinico, there was no motion of thanks, though Martinico was one of the most important conquests of the campaign; nor was any motion of that nature made until they had nearly reduced the whole of the West India islands.

If Lord Hood deserved the honour which the ministers proposed, why did they not bring forward the motion immediately on the receipt of the intelligence? They had been informed of his success prior to the victory of Earl Howe, and yet they suffered that to intervene, and now took advantage of the disposition of mens minds, which the glorious achievements of the latter had occasioned, to share their praise with every naval station. It was, he said, a strange confession, that one of the consequences of the war was, that we were embarrassed with the number of prisoners, and had already as many as were convenient, or could be accommodated. That, then, was one of the evils of the extensive and wide-spread war into which ministers had plunged the country. Why, he asked, had the difference between the land and the sea-service at Corfica been kept a secret, and the land-officer promoted as soon as he came home? It afforded clear evidence, that if the same cordiality had existed as in Lord Howe's fleet, Bastia would have been taken sooner. The Earl defended that part of the Duke of Bedford's argument respecting the small loss of men in the capture. The Noble Duke, he said, meant obviously, that if there had not been any dissension between the two services, the success would have been greater. He considered Bastia as a trifling acquisition, and thought if Lord Hood's squadron had been employed elsewhere, and united with Lord Howe's fleet, our late victory over the French, glorious and successful as it was, would have been much more glorious. The Noble Secretary had said, the House had but one way of shewing its approbation, which was by giving their thanks, and that they should be given when the service was important enough. If the importance of the victory was upon every occasion to be considered, there were other important victories, received with much more general joy and transport, which had never been noticed with more than usual commendation. Was not the surrender of Valenciennes effected by the Duke of York, and was not that surrender of more importance than Bastia? yet the thanks of that House were never communicated to his Royal Highness, though he had displayed such signal valour. Was the conduct of the son of the King

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on that occasion less meritorious than the conduct of Lord Hood in taking this famous Bastia? and yet there had been no shew of their boasted loyalty, in coming forward to thank the gallant Prince. As the whole island of Corsica was soon expected to become subject to our dominion, why did not the Administration wait till the whole island was reduced?

To give additional aid, the subject of Toulon was quoted; yet the evacuation of Toulon, with the burning of the fleet, was only mentioned in his Majesty's Speech, at the beginning of the session, and in the debate, which is always considered as an answer, without any further honour. If that was deserving the thanks of the House, the Noble Secretary should have made a motion at that time, when the House was well attended, and when their Lordships were prepared to discuss it.

The Lord Chancellor said, he was extremely concerned and astonished to hear the Noble Earl oppose a motion of thanks to an absent and deserving officer, and still more so, to hear him do it on such grounds. The Noble Earl (Lauderdale) had spoken very truly, when he said it was an invidious task to oppose such a motion. During the course of a long Parliamentary life, he never knew an instance of it; and the grounds, upon which it was now attempted, appeared to him to be extremely ill-founded. He declared, for his part, he thought more highly of British officers than to imagine they would be jealous of thanks voted to each other, by that or the other House of Parliament. Lord Howe's breast, he was satisfied, would glow with warmer ardour, when he heard that a branch of that fleet over which, so much to his honour, he presided, had acquitted themselves so honourably and so advantageously for their country. He had never imagined that any accidental difference of opinion between the two services would have been brought under discussion in Parliament; he knew of no instance of such conduct, and he considered it as uncommonly cruel and uncandid, in any Noble Lord, to take an opportunity of introducing such a topic, with a view to comment upon it and do mischief. With regard to the capture of Valenciennes, and the illustrious personage concerned in taking it, the mention was equally unfair. Every Englishman's breast, no doubt, was filled with the most grateful and satisfactory feelings towards his Royal Highness the Duke of York, for his noble, spirited, and gallant conduct, during the whole of the war. But why thank him for the capture of Valenciennes? For what were the House to thank him? Because a British Prince, at the head of a part of a British army, acting in concert with allied forces, under the command of another Prince,

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Prince, did his duty very eminently; and in a very distinguished manner, no doubt, had assisted in an able and masterly mode of obtaining possession of a place, not a conquest of the British nation, nor kept for them when conquered, or in their behalf. No man could be more ready than he was, to do the Duke of York every possible justice. He deserved it for every part of his conduct; but it was not a parallel case; it did not stand upon the ground that called for the thanks of the House. The whole of the conduct of Lord Hood in the Mediterranean, his Lordship said, had been highly beneficial to this country, as well as highly honourable to himself, but more particularly his conquest of Bastia; and if the supposed disunion between the commanders had actually existed, it only added to the lustre of the Noble Lord's achievement. He appealed, therefore, to their Lordships upon the hardship of opposing a motion of thanks to any Noble Lord, serving his country at a distance with acknowledged zeal and ability, and in a manner so effectual, that no man could deny his merit.

The Earl of Lauderdale again rose, and contended, that if Lord Hood were to be thanked for the capture of Bastia, the Duke of York ought to have been thanked for the glorious part he took in the conquest of Valenciennes. He maintained, that even under the explanation the Noble Secretary of State had given of the object of the war, namely, peace, which he had said could not be effected without restoring such a government to France, as should offer security to the rest of Europe, by making order, law, religion, and morality, its foundation principles, the subversion of the existing government of France was the avowed object, which was a different object from that actually pretended to be the object. He enlarged on his former argument, and said, that if the motion were to pass, the officers ought to be thanked as well as those in the sea-service; and therefore, if the motion of the *previous question*, which his Hon. Friend, the Noble Earl, had moved, were not carried, he should move, as an amendment, to extend the thanks to Lieutenant-Colonel Villette, the commander of the land-forces. His Lordship quoted the Gazette for the proof of Colonel Villette's merit.

The House then divided:

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Majority 26

The Lord Chancellor then proceeded to read Lord Grenville's original motion of thanks, and was putting the question, when he was interrupted by

The Earl of Lauderdale, who insisted that he had a right first to propose a motion of thanks to Colonel Villette, for his meritorious services at Corsica, Colonel Villette being equally entitled to them as Lord Hood.

This interposition of the Noble Earl being contrary to all the established rules of Parliament, he was called to order by the whole House.

The Noble Earl, however, persisted in what he called his right.

The Lord Chancellor stood up and said, he spoke to order from the woofack.

The Earl of Lauderdale, notwithstanding this, attempted to proceed, though the cry of "The Chair," "The Chair," echoed from all sides.

Lord Hawkesbury desired to be heard on the point of order. He declared he had sat thirty-five years in Parliament, and never witnessed such unruly and disorderly behaviour in any member. He had never known a Speaker opposed, when laying down the order as a Speaker. He called upon their Lordships to support the Chair, or all that was decent and orderly in the Senate would be annihilated.

The Earl of Lauderdale never sat down the whole time; and as soon as Lord Hawkesbury finished, again attempted to interrupt the Chancellor (who was also on his legs), and complained with great warmth of Lord Hawkesbury having been heard before him, although he was up first.

The House at length prevailed; and the united voice of their Lordships, in a peremptory manner, compelled the Noble Lord to desist.

The Lord Chancellor then was heard on the point of order, and declared, that when he was last interrupted, he had been on his legs appealing to the House, and asking leave to state from the woofack the order of their proceedings; he meant merely to state what he conceived to be his duty with regard to order, which he would then do. He explained the order accordingly, shewing, that no motion could be allowed to precede those of which the House were already in possession.

The Earl of Lauderdale rose to order. His Lordship complained of the tumultuous opposition that had been made to him; he said, he would leave it to the judgment of their Lordships, in their cooler moments, to decide upon. He had lost nothing, however, by the temporary triumph, if it were thought a triumph; because, by a motion of amendment, he could be let in to move all that he wished.

The Bishop of Rochester declared himself conscious of having joined in the tumultuous opposition to the Noble Earl, if so it

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could be deemed; and therefore rose to take his share of the blame, and state the principles on which he acted. His Lordship then traced the fact of the proceeding upon the *previous question*, when the words, "that the question be *now* put," was carried, therefore the Lord Chancellor was correct in his conduct; and, for his own part, the Bishop declared, he always would support the Chair.

The Earl of Derby replied, and stated the distinction that arose from the question having been only read from the Woolfack, without Lord Grenville's having formally moved it*.

The Lord Chancellor left the Woolfack, and gave his reasons why he differed from the Noble Earl.

The Earl of Caernarvon said a few words in support of the Noble Lord on the Woolfack.

The Earl of Mansfield declared, in a short but most able and perspicuous speech on the point of order, that the Lord Chancellor was to be considered as Speaker, and when he laid down order, being pre-eminent, every other Peer was bound to sit down. He should have thought the Noble and Learned Lord disorderly, but not stated him to be so, had he spoken of any thing but order from the Woolfack; it clearly was not so in this instance, but correctly right.

The Earl of Lauderdale concurred with the Noble Earl in every point he had stated; but contended, that he had been warranted in what he had said, and justified it, by reference to daily practice.

The Duke of Bedford thought what was order for one Peer ought to be order for another. Why not thank the Admirals as well as Lord Hood? He should move, as an amendment, to insert thanks to Admiral Sir Francis Goodall, and other Admirals on board Lord Hood's fleet.

The Earl of Lauderdale was again on his legs, and stated, that the Lord Chancellor's mode of address to intreat that he might speak from the Woolfack was a clear and sufficient proof that he meant to say something disorderly.

The Lord Chancellor once more explained, and proved, that the mode he had adopted was out of respect to the House, and not disorderly.

The Earl of Lauderdale moved an amendment to Lord Grenville's motion, which he maintained he had a right to do. This amendment was to introduce the name of Colonel Vilette.

* Lord Derby was correctly right in this point of order, which, in strict theory, is laid down as his Lordship stated it to be; but, from the looseness of practice, a habit had obtained of putting the remainder of any string of questions, which have been opened and read to the House, without the mover doing more than hand them to the Speaker.

Lord Sydney spoke of the uselessness of such an amendment; they might as well thank a marine officer as Lieutenant-Colonel Villette. His Lordship said, he knew the Colonel a little; he was a young officer, but a meritorious one, he believed: He had sense and judgment to know the nature of the present attempt, and to see its drift; and he believed he would not consider such a singling out as any great honour; if his name was introduced, so must all of the same rank in Corsica. The officers were all in the motion before the House, and that was perfectly sufficient.

The question was put on the amendment, and negatived.

The Duke of Bedford then moved, "That the Admirals who acted under Lord Hood be named in the thanks with Lord Hood."

The motion was put and negatived.

The remaining motion of acknowledgment to the men, &c. under Lord Hood in the expedition at Bastia, was put and carried; after which the House adjourned.

PROTEST

Against the Vote of Thanks to Lord Hood.

Dissentient,

1. Because it has not been the practice of this House to vote thanks to officers commanding his Majesty's forces by sea or land, except on occasions where they have eminently advanced the honour, and promoted the interests, of their country, by the most important and acknowledged services.

2. Because, by voting the thanks of this House, except in such instances, we diminish the value of the most honourable reward we have it in our power to confer, and lessen one of the best incitements to future service.

3. Because the reduction of Bastia does not in itself appear to us to be such a service as calls upon this House for any extraordinary mark of approbation or applause.

4. Because, whatever the merit of that service may be, the other Admirals of the fleet, and the Commanding Officers of his Majesty's land-forces, must have had their share in it, and to refuse thanking them, as had been usual on similar occasions, appears to us to justify an opinion, that the vote of thanks to Lord Hood originated from some motive of a private and personal nature, which it is improper for this House to countenance.

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5. Because even ministers themselves do not seem, in the first instance, to have considered that service as entitled to such a mark of approbation ; for, though accounts had been received of the reduction of Bastia, previous to those of the victory obtained by the fleet under the command of Earl Howe, no intention was announced of moving a vote of thanks to Lord Hood, till this House had paid the just tribute of gratitude and honour for that most important and splendid victory.

BEDFORD	DERBY
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HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TUESDAY, *June 17.*

An account of the negociable notes issued at Liverpool was presented, and laid upon the table.

The House agreed to the amendments made by the Lords in the Slave Trade Bill, and the Penitentiary Houses Bill.

John Campbell, Esq. for the borough of Irwine, &c. took the oaths and his seat.

Sir Watkin Lewes (one of the Representatives for London), pursuant to notice, moved for leave to bring in a " Bill for the better Regulation of the City Militia." He stated that the present manner in which the militia of the metropolis was regulated, was attended with many disadvantages, and that they were not adequate to the defence of the city. He wished, therefore, that they should be put upon the same footing, and conducted on the same plan, with the militia of the other parts of the kingdom. One regiment was to be constantly employed in the city ; and the other should be liable to any removal which might be thought proper. He hoped that the importance of the matter would impress the House with the necessity of its exigency ; and, as he understood that the House would continue to sit for some time longer than was expected, he hoped that the Bill would pass this session. Leave was granted to bring in the Bill, and *Sir Watkin Lewes*, *Mr. Alderman Anderson*, and *Mr. Alderman Newnham*, were ordered to prepare and bring in the same.

Sir Watkin Lewes then brought in the Bill, which was read a first time. Upon the order for a second reading,

Mr. Sheridan wished to know, from the worthy Alderman, what pressing necessity existed for bringing in such a Bill at so late a period of the session, when there was very little probability

bability of its passing into a law before the prorogation of Parliament would take place? The city, he had observed, had been well protected under its present military establishment; nor did he conceive there was any desire on their part of making a change in that establishment, as no petition had been presented from the City to that effect; besides, at the present time, he thought danger was less to be feared than at a former period it might have been; so that at all events the Bill was mis-timed.

Sir Watkin Lewes said, that he had explained the nature and necessity of the Bill before the Hon. Member came into the House, and he was convinced, when he examined the Bill, he would not give it any opposition.

Alderman Newnham supported the Bill, on the ground of the propriety of regulating the militia, which were under the present regulations inadequate to the defence of the metropolis; besides, in times like the present, he thought the City right in shewing their zeal in support of the common cause.

Mr. Sheridan did not mean to oppose a Bill, the contents of which he did not know; but he thought it rather an ill-timed expression of zeal, to come forward when the danger was passed, if any had ever existed.

Mr. Alderman Anderson moved to have the Bill printed, in which motion *Mr. Sheridan* concurred.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer carried up the address to his Majesty, to the Lords, to acquaint them with the concurrence of the Commons therein.

THANKS TO THE MANAGERS OF THE IMPEACHMENT.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, he intended that day to have moved the thanks of the House to the Managers of the Impeachment against *Mr. Hastings*, for their excellent conduct in a laborious service, but understanding that the motion was to undergo some discussion, and as he did not wish it to be in so thin a House, he should postpone it to Thursday the 19th.

Mr. Sumner was proceeding to state the difficulty the House would have in making up its opinion on a trial which had lasted for many years—when

The Speaker observed, that if the Hon. Member did not intend to conclude with a motion, it was not in order to hear him upon a notice.

Adjourned.

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HOUSE OF LORDS.

WEDNESDAY, June 18.

Met, and adjourned to Friday the 20th.

The Lord Chancellor, attended by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Grenville, the Earl of Mansfield, Lord Hawkebury, and several other Peers, and the Speaker of the House of Commons, accompanied by several of its Members, proceeded to St. James's, and presented the following

ADDRESS TO THE KING,

FOUNDED ON THE REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES OF BOTH HOUSES,
UPON THE PAPERS OF A SEDITIOUS AND TREASONABLE NATURE,
WITH WHICH HIS MAJESTY HAD ACCOMPANIED HIS ROYAL
MESSAGE OF MAY 12.

" Most Gracious Sovereign,

" We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in Parliament assembled, having taken into our most serious consideration the communications which your Majesty has been pleased to make to us, respecting designs against the public peace and safety, carried on within this realm, think it our bounden duty, at this period, humbly to lay before your Majesty those sentiments to which we are led by the result of that examination.

" We have seen, with the utmost concern and indignation, that there has existed within this realm a seditious and traitorous conspiracy, directed to the subversion of the authority of your Majesty and your Parliament, and to the utter destruction of the established constitution and government of these your Majesty's kingdoms; and that, for the execution of those wicked and detestable designs, means of open violence were preparing, and acts meditated, leading to all the horrors of insurrection, anarchy, and rebellion.

" That, with the fullest conviction of these designs, thus deliberately entertained, openly avowed, and on the very point of being attempted to be executed, we feel ourselves bound to express to your Majesty our gratitude for the paternal care which your Majesty has shewn for the dearest interests of your people, in having taken such measures as might best tend to defeat all such purposes, and to bring the authors and abettors of them to public justice.

" We have, on our part, proceeded without delay, after the example of our ancestors, and under the just impression of the exigency of such a situation, to vest in your Majesty, by law, such additional powers as seem best calculated to provide for
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the public peace and tranquillity. And we rely with confidence on your Majesty's employing all legal and constitutional means for the punishment of such crimes; for the suppression of the first appearance of any tumult or disorder connected with them; and generally, for the giving, as the circumstances manifestly require, full energy and vigour to the execution of the laws by which all your Majesty's subjects are equally protected, and from which alone they can derive the secure enjoyment of property, of liberty, and of life itself.

"And we beg leave to assure your Majesty, that, as we are determined to defend with resolution and vigour, against our foreign enemies, the rights of your Majesty's Crown, the safety and welfare of our country, and the existence of good order and civil society, so we will, on every occasion, afford to your Majesty the fullest support and assistance in maintaining inviolate the free constitution of these realms, in preserving internal peace and tranquillity, and in resisting the desperate purposes of those who would introduce among us the miseries which now prevail in France; such being the conduct which we feel to be due from us, as faithful and affectionate subjects, and as men deeply impressed with the value of the blessings which we enjoy."

The following is his Majesty's most gracious answer:

"My Lords and Gentlemen,

"I receive, with great satisfaction, this dutiful and loyal address.

"I could not doubt of the concern and indignation with which you would see, from the communications which I directed to be made to you, the nature and extent of the treasonable conspiracy which has been carried on in this kingdom, and directed to the subversion of the established constitution and government. You may be assured, that nothing shall be wanting, on my part, to give due energy and vigour to the execution of the laws, in order to maintain our internal peace and tranquillity, and to preserve to my subjects the blessings of liberty and order. Your uniform conduct affords me the surest pledge that I shall, on all occasions, receive from you that assistance and support which may best contribute to these points, so essential to the dearest interests of my people, whose happiness must ever be the first object of my wishes."

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HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, June 18.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, and other Members of the Privy Council, proceeded with the address to the King on the Report of the Committee of Secrecy.
Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, June 19.

The Speaker counted the House at four o'clock; and there being only twenty-six Members present, they necessarily separated.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, June 20.

The Lord Chancellor informed the House, that they had waited upon his Majesty with their address, to which he was pleased to return a most gracious answer.

The Lord Chancellor then read to the House the following answer from Admiral Earl Howe, to the vote of thanks transmitted by him to the Earl, pursuant to order of the House.

LETTER FROM EARL HOWE.

" My Lord,

" Acknowledging my obligations in respect of the very flattering terms in which your Lordship has been pleased to make known to me the highly esteemed honour conferred upon me by the unanimous resolution of thanks of the House of Lords, signified in your letter of the 14th instant, I am to intreat that you will have the further goodness to assure their Lordships of the deep impression I shall ever retain of their condescending notice.

" The merit I would assume on this occasion, consists in my good fortune; inasmuch as I held the chief command, when so many resolute principal and subordinate officers, as well as brave men, serving under their orders, were employed at that time in the fleet. And I must add, that if there is cause for triumph in the late defeat of the enemy at sea, it is truly the triumph of the British sailors, whose animated and persevering courage, I believe, has in no instance ever been exceeded. I shall therefore have a great increase of happiness in obeying

the commands of the House of Lords, by communicating to those several descriptions of persons, the sense their Lordships have deigned to express of their good conduct.

" I have the honour to remain,

" With the greatest respect,

" My Lord,

" Your Lordship's most obedient, humble servant,
" HOWE."

The Queen Charlotte, at Spithead,
the 18th day of June 1794.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, June 20.

The House in a Committee, *Mr. Hobart* in the chair, went through the City Militia Bill, and made some amendments thereto.

Mr. Hobart presented the report, which was received, and the several amendments agreed to by the House.

Upon the question that this Bill, with the amendments, be now engrossed,

Mr. Sheridan said, that he should certainly have given some opposition to the Bill, had he been in the House when the Bill had been in its former stages. He did not perceive any immediate necessity for hurrying the Bill through the House in such a manner, as not even to give the citizens of London time to consider its effects. With regard to the particular clauses of it, he thought them highly objectionable, and such as the preamble did not warrant, which carried on the very face of the proceeding, something like deceit. It set forth, that there were some defects in the present militia establishment; and, in order to remedy such defects, the Bill entirely destroyed the ancient constitutional force of the city. Their present force consisted of 9000 men, which, if properly managed, would be an effectual protection for the city; in the place of this force, it was proposed that there should be substituted two regiments of militia, which were to be under the controul of the King, and to add to the influence of the Crown, consisting but of 600 men each, which did not appear to him to be any improvement of its military force. For these reasons, *Mr. Sheridan* said, he felt it his duty to move, that the engrossing of this Bill be postponed to Monday se'nnight. Should it then be thought expedient to persevere in the measure, Gentlemen would at least have the benefit of the interval to weigh the matter

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matter thoroughly in their minds before they assented to a Bill of so mischievous a tendency.

Sir James Sanderson defended the measure; he said, that all possible means were used to render the defence of the city, by raising a militia by the former law, practicable, but without effect; and he stated, that it was the sense of the City at large, as well as his own firm conviction, that the city was safer with an actual defence of 1200 disciplined men, than it could be with the armed multitude alluded to by the Hon. Gentleman, under all the disadvantages and difficulties of raising them under the old regulation, if they could be raised at all, which he thought was not very likely. He contended that the old force of the city was of no use whatever, nor ever had been.

Alderman Curtis followed him on the same grounds, as did also *Sir Watkin Lewis*.

Mr. Francis opposed the Bill, on the ground of its being a measure to increase the Executive Power, without any necessity for such increase. At all events, from the importance of it, it ought to have time allowed for a fair consideration.

Mr. Alderman Anderson supported the Bill.

Mr. Sheridan said, he regarded it as a Bill of pains and penalties against the City, for their having refused to enter into the late subscriptions so earnestly solicited by Government. The measure was so fraught with mischief, so repugnant to the spirit of freedom that had ever distinguished the metropolis, that he could not believe the inhabitants had been consulted upon the subject. If they had, in fact, consented to it, they acceded to a pusillanimous abandonment of their most valuable rights and privileges. They were to give up the power they had long enjoyed by charter, of defending themselves by a force selected out of their own body, subject only to their own laws. If that body was defective in some particular, as perhaps it was, the defect ought to be removed, but the whole system of the City force should not be destroyed at once, which by this Bill passing into a law, he must contend, would be the case. He was confident that the citizens of London did not thoroughly understand the full extent of the Bill; if they did, they would not have instructed their Representatives to support it; and if their Representatives did support it after their constituents had proper information on the subject, he believed those Gentlemen would never have an opportunity of presenting any thing on the part of the city of London again. Instead of amending the existing laws, as it professed to do, it went to disarm the City of their present power, and to vest it in the hands of the Crown. It was a link of that chain of innovation

on the rights of the people which characterized the present Administration; and another attempt to convert the government of the country into an absolute monarchy. He thought this measure one of the most daring which had been brought forward during this session, and that it was a continuation of the system of ministers to introduce a military government into the country, in place of its natural and constitutional force.

Mr. Secretary Dundas said, the measure had originated with the city of London, who had on this, as on every other occasion, distinguished themselves for their loyalty and attachment to the government of the country. They had stepped forward with alacrity in support of good order, and for internal defence. The Bill, so far from being a Bill of pains and penalties, was directly the reverse. It was a substitute for the Bill proposed by Parliament, from the letter of which, the City, no doubt, for wise reasons, thought proper to dissent. Still retaining the spirit of it, however, their conduct furnished a striking instance of firmness and independence on the one hand, and of loyalty and attachment to the Executive Government on the other. *Mr. Dundas* did not believe that the citizens of London were so uninformed on this subject as the *Hon. Gentleman* who first spoke against the Bill would insinuate: The truth was, that the citizens of London had considered the Bill maturely, and they knew it to be a proper measure: They understood their interests too well to need the warning voice of the *Hon. Gentleman*, to call them to the standard to assert their rights. They knew the value of the blessings they enjoyed, and they had too much good sense ever to abandon them but with their lives. He then took a general review of the militia laws, and of the Volunteer Corps Bill, and pointed out the variation that was solicited by the present Bill.

Mr. Alderman Newnham declared, that the measure did originate with the City, who had well considered the subject; the Alderman further said, he observed several Gentlemen of the Committee in the gallery, who, if they were permitted to speak, would demonstrate the alacrity with which the proposition was adopted by all ranks of persons east of Temple-bar.

Mr. Sheridan insisted, that, if the city of London was induced to concur in this measure, it must have been taken by surprise, and not have had sufficient explanation. He was astonished to hear such disparagement of the old city establishment, especially from Sir Watkin Lewes, under whose martial eye they were formed; he surely ought not to ridicule a military establishment, of which he himself was a considerable commander. [*A loud laugh.*] He did not speak ironically. The

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The Hon. Gentleman bore a very respectable military reputation, though perhaps not so high as the Prince of Cobourg, the late King of Prussia, or Colonel Mack. Mr. Sheridan said, he was surprised to hear from the Hon. Gentleman that the present militia was of no service, nor that it ever had been: He had forgot the services they had rendered the country in the times of Charles the First, particularly at the siege of Gloucester. The worthy magistrate (Sir James Sander-son) was also a great military commander, and had on a former occasion received thanks for his conduct. It was true, he might want the military air of his Hon. Friend near him (Colonel Cawthorne), but he might nevertheless possess talents sufficient to improve the present force of the city, and not lend his aid to destroy it. The occasions on which this militia was to be called out, were notoriously vague. One of them was imminent danger of rebellion. The *Habeas Corpus* Act had already been suspended, the militia called out, and the Parliament suddenly assembled, on account of intended invasions and apprehended insurrection. The city force was now at the disposal of the City; if this force were superseded, the new militia would be entirely at the disposal of the Crown. Why had not the Hon. Gentlemen come earlier to Parliament, if they knew so well the inefficacy of the city militia? Was it only within a few days, or a few weeks, that they had discovered it to be useless and burdensome? The surrender of the charter appeared to him extraordinary, and the safe and pufillanimous manner in which it was done still more so. He did not think that the consent of the citizens was sufficient to induce the House to pass a Bill of this nature; and being confident too, that the citizens did not understand the extent of the Bill, he should persist in moving that the debate on the Bill be adjourned till Monday the 23d, to give some short time to the inhabitants of London to consider of the measure.

Upon this motion the House divided :

<i>For the Adjournment</i>	—	12
<i>Against it</i>	—	70
		—
	<i>Majority</i>	58

THANKS TO THE MANAGERS OF THE IMPEACHMENT OF
MR. HASTINGS.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, he conceived it to be the immemorially established usage of that House, when it selected any of its Members for the discharge of extraordinary duties, or for the direction and execution of extraordinary trusts, as soon as those duties were discharged, and those trusts fulfilled,

fulfilled, to render them that satisfaction to which their labours and fidelity entitled them. Having premised thus much, and ascertained it by reference to the conduct of the House in the cases of impeachment on its records, he said, that he expected to have the opinion of most of the Hon. Members present with him, that if this usage was, on former impeachments, considered as necessarily resulting from the justice of the House, the present case came before them with a claim equal, if not superior, to any that stood upon their Journals; for it was a task of great length, labour, and difficulty, and had been performed by the Hon. Managers with indefatigable industry, unparalleled patient assiduity, and laudable obedience to the desires of that House; and, still more, with such unexampled ability, that he knew not what reward was adequate to their services. That which alone the House had it in their power to bestow, he said, it was their bounden duty to give—He meant, their thanks and approbation.

Contemplating it rather as a matter of justice than of mere favour, when he had proposed to move the House to this effect, he thought that it would have been unnecessary for him to have made a single observation on the subject, further than to state the facts *pro formâ*, as a ground for the motion: He really thought a debt so obviously due, would be discharged by unanimous consent; he did not suppose it possible that he should have met with any opposition. He did not think that Gentlemen could, if they regarded Parliamentary propriety, refuse to the Managers the tribute of the thanks of the House, whatever might have been their early opinions with regard to the propriety of the impeachment itself. The right of impeachment was a most valuable part of the British constitution, and perhaps as important, when exercised to protect our distant provinces from oppression, and to controul the severity of Oriental despotism, as when enforced to correct offences committed against our own laws and constitution at home. Finding that an opposition was intended, he had taken some pains to consider, and to conjecture, what rational objections could possibly be made to it: Such as he had been able to conceive, he would answer, he said, by anticipation, reserving to himself a right of replying to any others that might have escaped the search of his imagination; in which search he had not only ranged through the wide field of objection that ingenuity might, by its most overstrained efforts, raise against his proposition, and examined them with all the attention in his power, but he had taken into consideration what that class of men were, from whom such objections could come consistently

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consistently with their former conduct on voting the impeachment, or canvassing the propriety of conduct of a Member of that House in the discharge of his Parliamentary functions.

The usage of the House on such occasions being undeniable, he said the question must necessarily resolve itself into this, "Was there any thing peculiarly belonging to this case, to make it an exception to the general practice?" as to the expediency or in expediency, the justice or the hardship, of the impeachment, each was quite foreign to the present question. The impeachment itself had been voted, not only under the conviction of the guilt of the party impeached, but as a terror to those placed in a similar situation in the government of our distant provinces; and whatever the ultimate decision might be, he was confident that the example of Mr. Hastings would deter other governors from a repetition of the practices which marked his administration: And securing the properties of the natives, by salutary regulations, would temper every Oriental despotism.

The managers who conducted all former impeachments had been rewarded with the only reward which they could receive for their labours, the approbation of the House of Commons. He had examined with some care, whether there were any circumstances that distinguished this from every other impeachment, in such a manner as to make it improper or unnecessary to pass a vote of thanks to those Members who had conducted it; and, after an accurate and minute investigation, he was of opinion, that it was distinguished from all other trials of a similar nature, by circumstances of unusual partiality in favour of those Gentlemen. They had been placed in a grand and striking situation, when the House had committed the accusation of Mr. Hastings to their charge; and when he considered the comprehensive inquiries, the patience of mind, and the perspicacity of judgment which they were called upon to exert, and which they had so amply displayed in the performance of this duty, he thought them highly entitled to the thanks of the House. The House, by voting it, had at least declared their sense that it should operate as an example to regulate the conduct of future governors, and point out to them the necessity of maintaining good government, and dispensing with a faithful hand the distributions of equal law and justice to the most remote corners of the realm. If those Gentlemen who meant to oppose his proposition, would themselves look with the unbiassed eye of candour to the proceedings, they would find in them something more important and more glorious than the merely vindicating the rights of Great Britain at home; they would find them vindicating people
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and nations in the most distant regions we possess, and, with an outstretched and mighty arm, shielding them from oppression: Great though the Commons of Great Britain were in power, and glorious in the exercise of that power, he would maintain, that they never appeared more majestic than when extending protection to distant nations.

He demonstrated to the House the merits of the Managers in the conduct of the impeachment. He said, that when they considered the long and almost unremitted labour, the magnitude of the object, the weight of the charge, the almost unbounded extent of the proofs, documents, and other materials, the Managers had indeed a Herculean task to perform; and the perseverance and perspicacity required and displayed by the Managers in the exercise of the task assigned to them, were so many evidences in their favour, and sufficient not only to extort the warmest applause from the House, but even to cover, or rather annihilate, any error, if errors there should be stated against them. Exclusive of those reasons, however, he would still maintain, that it was a right conferred by custom, and that the House could not make this case an exception to the usual conduct of Parliament, unless it appeared to them that there was a failure or miscarriage arising from the misconduct of the Managers.

In considering the objections that might possibly be started, the first that struck him, as a general ground, was the length of the time. In this objection, however, on a general view, he was by no means inclined to concur: It was at best but mere presumption; for he would put it to any man of candour and sound sense, to consider the length of the proceedings, the nature of the charges brought by the Commons, and the nature of the evidence necessary to support those charges; and to declare, whether any imputation, on the score of the duration of the impeachment, could at all attach on the managers: The very nature of impeachment, he said, carried with it a cure for that objection, as it implied a case of great length, and beyond the scope of an ordinary court of judicature; and, therefore, to make it a presumptive objection, was to make a presumption against the very nature of impeachment itself. To examine the nature of that objection on other grounds, and consider the general impression that had been endeavoured to be made of the length of the trial, he reminded the House of the mode in which justice directed that it should be considered. The duration of the impeachment, he said, was to be estimated, not by the years elapsed since its commencement, but by the days and hours actually allotted by the Court for the purpose: The House was to recollect what number of days the Court
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fat at all, and of each of those days how many hours were given to the business in hand; and they were then to consider what portion of that was consumed by the Managers, and what by the defendant: And still further, what additional delay given by the latter, by increasing unwearied objections, taken on his part to every thing almost offered on the part of the prosecution. To prove this disposition to object to evidence, Gentlemen had but to look to the Report made by their Committee on the causes of delay, and they would find it fully proved: They would find that the counsel for the defence indicated such a disposition to cavil and to object to evidence, that the imputation of delay originated with the party himself. Their earnestness in endeavouring to get evidence suppressed, was a strong presumption that the Managers proposed none that was irrelevant to the charge; but the forms of the Court obliged the Lords to reject, in many instances, what had been procured by great industry and perseverance: And again, of the portion consumed by the Managers, how much was lost in consequence of replying to trivial and vexatious obstructions proposed by the defendant's counsel, as barriers to the progress of the impeachment; in which objections the defendant's counsel were generally fortunate and successful. The Managers had to discuss question after question; and in these discussions it frequently fell to their lot to defend points more important even than the impeachment, and which they could not have given up without abandoning some of the best privileges of our ancestors. Gentlemen were bound in candour to refrain from opposing this motion, unless they had minutely examined the whole question. Were there any Members in that House who could stand up and say, that they could have brought the trial to a conclusion in less time than the Committee of Managers had taken? He did not think that any Hon. Member had reason to complain of them for dilatoriness; but if they even had, he was afraid their complaint would at that time come too late. They should have made it when the cause had occurred, and when the evil might have been remedied. To delay it till the trial was over, was an injustice both to the Managers and the accused. It looked, he said, as if they connived at those things, in order to bring them forward in injury to the Managers.

Under these circumstances, he said, he could not see who could object to the vote of thanks. Those who were originally friends of the impeachment, and thought that there was grave cause for inquiry, could not vote against it; had they changed their opinion of the impeachment, they should have arrested the progress of it, rather than have treasured up their opinion

to be brought forth at that unseasonable time. Another class of persons who might object to the vote of thanks, were those who had been averse to the impeachment *ab origine*. To such he would make this general observation, that their voices being absorbed by the majority, they were as much bound by subsequent resolutions, as if they had given their assent to them. They were, however, at liberty to retain their opinions on the propriety of the measures; they could not add any thing to the *eclat* of the managers, by joining in the vote of thanks; on the contrary, their dissent would prove it not a business of course, but of discrimination, and the rules of the House would preclude them from animadverting on the arguments that led to that discussion. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, he felt himself impelled by a sense of duty to enter into those particulars, and to anticipate the objections that might be produced against the measure.

He did not wish to be understood to cast any personal reflection on the Gentlemen who were friends to Mr. Hastings; their motives he did not think it necessary to scan or to discuss. The question was, whether the vote of thanks should pass unanimously, or receive the assent of those only who were friends to the impeachment? And he wished those Gentlemen who had shewn themselves hostile to the impeachment, and were rivetted in their attachment to Mr. Hastings, to reflect seriously before they gave a negative to the motion; for he doubted much whether an unanimous vote of that House (honourable though it was) would be so honourable to the Managers, as a vote of thanks marked with the discriminating negative of those who felt themselves irritated and stung by the faithful and admirable discharge of the task imposed upon them by their country.

He, however, acknowledged he yet entertained a wish, that the vote of thanks might be unanimous on that occasion, as he trusted it would in the subsequent motion, for a similar mark of national gratitude to Lord Hood, &c. and shew to the country that those who exercised the functions of good citizens at home, and those who defended their country abroad, were equally the objects of esteem and veneration.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer concluded by moving,
 "That the thanks of this House be given to the Members
 "who were appointed Managers of the impeachment against
 "Warren Hastings, for their faithful management in dis-
 "charge of the trust reposed in them by the Commons."

Mr. Dundas seconded the motion.

Mr. Sumner said, he could not avoid expressing his surprise, that a motion such as that he had just heard read, should be considered

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considered as a matter of course. He said, that he rose with considerable diffidence to oppose a motion which had been made by the Right Hon. Gentleman, with whom it was generally his good fortune to agree. The Right Hon. Gentleman had supported the motion with all his talents and with all his influence, but he must add, he had not displayed any great degree of candour in the course of his speech, when he presupposed the objections which would be made from a certain description of Gentlemen in that House, one of whom he had infinite pride and pleasure in declaring himself to be. Mr. Sumner said, he was happy to avow himself a very great admirer of Mr. Hastings; that he looked up to him with every sentiment of regard and affection; but his objections to the present motion arose from circumstances utterly independent of Mr. Hastings. The Right Hon. Gentleman had said, that Mr. Hastings could not in any shape be affected now by any motion that could be made in that House;—that the decision was before a competent court, which could only determine by evidence. Admitting this to be the fact, as he did, still a vote of thanks was, in a certain degree, a vote of approbation of the Managers' conduct. Surely the period was too short for the House to determine upon the conduct of their Managers. Seven years had the trial lasted, and it had been attended with circumstances new and most extraordinary. It was said, that the present motion was in conformity to precedent, but even in point of precedent, this was not the season to propose a vote of thanks. It was not justified by the usage of Parliament. In reverting to the Journals, the Hon. Member said, instances were not wanting, where no vote at all was proposed in behalf of the conductors of an impeachment, but in none did it appear that the acknowledgments of the House had been conferred prior to judgment being pronounced.

[The *Speaker* observed, that the Hon. Member must mean *verdict*, and not *judgment*. According to the usage of Parliament, the Lords give the verdict in their own chamber. They then inform the Commons, that they are ready to proceed to give judgment. The Commons, in answer, appoint a future day to demand judgment. In the cases of Dr. Sacheverel and Lord Macclesfield (which Mr. Sumner, when interrupted, was proceeding to instance), the Commons carried a vote of thanks in the interval between the giving of the verdict and the pronouncing of the judgment openly in the court.]

It was true, Mr. Sumner said, that on former occasions thanks had been voted, and as the *Speaker* had informed him from the chair, before the judgment was pronounced, but certainly not until the verdict was known. In this instance the thanks would

be voted many months before the judgment, and though any thing that could be construed into an approbation of the Commons, would not affect the judgment, there was an indecency in the proceedings which led him to oppose it in the first instance by the previous question.

Mr. Sumner said, that if the time were not improper, he certainly would not oppose a vote of thanks to the Managers, *one excepted*, who had faithfully discharged the trust imposed on them, by supporting the specific charges voted by the last House of Commons. Mr. Sumner said, that he retained the same opinion which he had so often professed of the charges, which he thought to be ill-founded; but it was the duty of the Managers to support them, and he never would be so illiberal as to object to their receiving the thanks of that House at a proper time, provided they could be given without their bestowing their thanks at the same time on the leading Manager, who, he contended, had by his conduct disgraced and degraded the House of Commons, and had dared, in their name, to vilify every Gentleman who had had the honour and good fortune to serve his country in India; including in his abuse, all their connexions of every description, and applying the odious epithet *gang* to this body of men. [The Speaker calling to *Order*!] Mr. Sumner said, that if he could find more measured expressions to convey to the House his sense of the misconduct of Mr. Burke, and of the disgrace he had brought upon the House, he would use them; but he would proceed to explain of what nature the Manager's conduct had been, in the hope that it would be as much reprobated by the House, as he knew it was *by all descriptions of persons out of doors*. The facts that he should detail, the Members in general were ignorant of, for very few indeed had attended; and of all Members of the House, the Right Hon. Gentleman below him was the last man who was competent to decide on the conduct of the Managers, his various avocations making his absence from the trial an act of necessity. He had too high an opinion of the minister to think it *possible* for him to have made the motion before them, had he ever heard the leading Manager in Westminster-hall. Mr. Sumner said, in the light he viewed a vote of thanks, he could not possibly assent to it. Did the House know that Mr. Burke had solemnly affirmed, that Captain Williams had murdered Raja Mustapha Cawn with his own hands? He would ask, what authority had the House given Mr. Burke to make such a charge? Was it decent or honourable in the House to suffer such language to be uttered against any Gentleman, and yet deny to him the means of defending himself? All that man could do was done by Captain Wil-

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liams to bring this outrageous calumny to a fair trial; he petitioned the House upon it five years ago, the House would not bring a charge that he could reply to; and is the Manager to receive thanks for daring to charge an English Gentleman with murder in a speech, and there to leave it? Is this British justice?

The last House voted twenty articles of impeachment against Mr. Hastings; three were gone through in the last Parliament, Benares, the Begum, and the Presents. This House, by a formal vote*, precluded the Managers from going into any other articles except the Contracts; and the prosecution was finally closed in the first session of this Parliament. Does the House know, that in contempt and defiance of this resolution, the Manager insisted on his right to go into the other articles, and expressly told the Lords, that the Commons had not abandoned them, nor ever would abandon any one of them? Will the House thank the Manager for this contempt of their authority? Does the House know, that the language used by the leading Manager to the Court was in the highest degree disgraceful? That he had the presumption to tell the Court, whether with a view to intimidation, or from the wildness of the moment, that the Commons had not only prosecuted, but they had found Mr. Hastings guilty when they impeached him; that the Lords could not acquit him without proving the Legislature a liar? Is such language to be borne? Is this British justice? Will an English House of Commons approve of such sentiments? What is a solemn trial by impeachment but a mockery, a farce, if such language is not scouted by every man who hears it? The leading Manager finding the general sentiments of Gentlemen who have served in India to be strongly in favour of Mr. Hastings, and in order to invalidate the testimony of the witnesses, has attempted to blacken and to blast the character of every Gentleman who has breathed the air of Asia. Was this universal abuse necessary in order to convict Mr. Hastings? Is the character and fame of every

* The vote alluded to by Mr. Sumner, which precluded the Managers from going into any further articles except Contracts, passed the 14th February 1791, and is in the following words:

"That in consideration of the length of time which has already elapsed since carrying up the impeachment now depending against Warren Hastings, Esq. *it appears to this House to be proper*, for the purpose of obtaining substantial justice, *with as little further delay as possible, to proceed to no other parts of the said impeachment than those on which the Managers have already closed their evidence, excepting only such parts as relate to contracts, pensions, and allowances.*"

Upon this motion a division took place, Mr. Ryder proposing, that the prosecution should be *instantly closed*; the numbers were 161 to 79, so that it was carried to go on as far as Contracts, but no further.

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man to be torn in pieces without a hearing? Is this to be done by the authority of the House of Commons? Are they prepared to adopt at once the extravagant and indecorous substitution of the slang of Billingsgate, for the strong energetic language of truth and justice? Would they sanction the Manager's calling Mr. Hastings, "Spider of Hell," and "Judge of Hell?" Will they confer on Mr. Hastings, by this vote, the minor titles of swindler, thief, rogue, sharper, cheat, or the more daring descriptions, tyrant, oppressor, and murderer? "I charge him," said the Manager, "as a tyrant, *oppressor, and murderer in the largest sense of the word.*" Does the House know, that though Mr. Burke was reprimanded for accusing Mr. Hastings of murder, he repeated the charge on the very next day, and again repeated it a few days ago, as he says himself, *in the largest sense of the word?* Instead of thanks, does he not deserve the resentment and the reprobation of the House? Has the House ever charged Mr. Hastings with murder? On the contrary, has it not reprimanded the Manager for using such foul language? In his last and closing speech he has dared to say, that he charged Mr. Hastings with murder in the largest sense of the word, and this is at a period when he could make no new charge of any kind without a positive disobedience of the orders of the House. Shall we return him thanks for abusing so grossly the confidence which the House reposed in him?

Did the House mean to impeach every man who had served his country in India, when they put Mr. Hastings on his trial? The violence of the Manager had spared neither the dead nor the living. Hear, said Mr. Sumner, what he says in his closing speech:

"This cruel tyrant, Hannay, a substitute for a still more cruel and bloody tyrant, Warren Hastings—Hastings says to Hannay, you have sucked blood enough for yourself, now suck blood for your neighbours."

Does this House authorise such language? Colonel Hannay is dead. No part of his conduct is implicated in the articles on which the cause rests.

Speaking of another Gentleman, the Manager says, "This Balfour, the writer of this extraordinary letter, one of the military farmers general employed under Hannay in desolating the country." Is such language to be countenanced or endured? What is there in the charge that applies in the smallest degree to Major Balfour?

Speaking of Major Osborne, the Manager said, "Major Osborne had been dismissed. A court-martial removed him, justly or unjustly I care not, from his situation." There

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"There he sits in that box. Who sent him to Oude, to suck the blood the military had spared?"

What is there, said Mr. Sumner, in the articles on which the Commons rest their case, that applies to Major Osborne? The House is degraded and disgraced by the misconduct of the Manager.

"His supple, worn-down, beaten, cowed, and I am afraid, bribed colleague, Mr. Wheeler." Is this justifiable language to be applied to a man who is no more, when there is no evidence that can warrant such an insinuation? In any stage of the trial, said Mr. Sumner, such language would be highly improper; but in the last stage of it, after evidence was closed on both sides, to make such remarks was, in fact, to betray the cause entrusted to him; for he excited no sentiments but those of indignation and contempt, either in the Court or in the audience, by such general and illiberal abuse.

In the same indecent terms that the Manager had mentioned every Gentleman almost who had given evidence on the trial, did he address the Court. Does the House know, that in offering a piece of evidence which the Court unanimously rejected, the Manager told them that he was addressing an assembly of Nobles, that they would not do so foul a thing as to reject the evidence he offered; for if they did, they would act like thieves in a night-cellar?

Mr. Sumner said, he could continue to quote passages from the last speech of the Manager so very offensive to decency, so degrading to the character of the House of Commons, as would shock the ears of every Gentleman who reflected, that as a Member he shared in the disgrace brought upon them all by the Manager; but he trusted he had laid sufficient grounds for the motion which he meant to conclude with, and would therefore move the *previous question*.

Mr. Wigley said, he rose to second the motion, and very fully concurred in all the observations of his Hon. Friend. But there was another reason which also weighed most forcibly with him: The House was sensible of the clamour which had been raised out of doors, and justly raised, on account of the unprecedented duration of this trial. The House felt it, and had ordered a Committee to report the causes of the duration of it. The House had good reasons, he presumed, though they did not occur to him, for appointing the Managers to be the members of that Committee. It struck him, that they were made judges in their own cause, for the fault must be with the Managers, the counsel of Mr. Hastings, or the Lords. In the
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close of that Report another was promised. Was it decent to thank the Managers before any motion was even made upon the first, or before the second Report, though promised so long ago, was delivered? No precedent of former thanks applied in any degree to this case. The trial had lasted seven years, and would not be finally terminated until the next session. Let Gentlemen consider the nature of their Managers' conduct before they came forward with a vote of approbation. If the trial had been finished in the first year, the House would have been competent to form an opinion, but the Members had deserted the Hall, and even of the Managers very few had lately attended. At all events, Mr. Wigley conceived the present to be a very improper time to vote thanks to the Managers.

Mr. Robinson said, he had been present in Westminster-hall when the leading Manager had, in his opinion, treated the Court with very great indecency. The security of the constitution depended upon each branch of the Legislature being kept perfectly distinct, and on its being treated with every degree of respect. As the leading Manager had not acted towards the Court in a manner that became him to act, he should certainly oppose his receiving the thanks of the House.

Mr. Windham, after complimenting the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the masterly manner in which he had anticipated and answered the objections to the motion, said, that although at first intending not to speak, as being in some degree a party in the question, yet he felt himself relieved from this, by the distinction taken between Mr. Burke and the other Managers; although he was convinced there was not one of them but would be proud to be connected with him in the fame and honour of the transaction. Declaring himself as competent to decide upon what had passed at the trial as any other person whatever, from his constant attendance, he affirmed, that in every instance quoted by the Member who opposed the motion, he had been completely mistaken; in many instances attributing to Mr. Burke words never uttered by him, and in others the expressions were so garbled and separated from the context, as not to be understood. He said that he was at a loss to know by what vocabulary of politeness, what academy of compliments, courts of criminal judicature were to be directed in the choice of language, and in the selection of soft polite words, to express the criminality of culprits. Thoughts, he said, were only to be conveyed by suitable expressions; and the indignation of a virtuous man against a person whom he supposed to be a criminal, could not be expressed in very polite terms. He, for one, had never conceived,

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ceived, that in speaking upon what the Managers looked upon to be crimes of the deepest dye, they were to observe the courtly language of a drawing-room.

Mr. Francis said, that his intention in addressing the House on the present occasion, was to give his testimony as a witness to certain points of fact: That having attended the trial with the greatest diligence, and more constantly, he believed, than any other Member of the House, he was at least a competent witness upon every thing that passed, and that he did not mean to assume any other character in this debate: That, without questioning the Hon. Gentleman's veracity, he did and must dispute the exactness of his recollection on many points; and that even the Hon. Gentleman himself had not trusted entirely to his own memory, having been obliged to refresh it by recurring to a newspaper, to which *Mr. Francis* well knew that no confidence ought to be given: That he thought the Hon. Gentleman had greatly overstated, and given a very harsh and strained construction, in every instance, to the language used in the pleadings by his Right Hon. Friend; but that, in some very material particulars, he took upon him to affirm, that the Hon. Gentleman had been grossly mistaken or misinformed. For example, the expression of *Spider of Hell* was never applied by his Right Hon. Friend to *Mr. Hastings*; it was a quotation from a speech of Sir Edward Coke against Sir Walter Raleigh, and *Mr. Burke*, when he mentioned it, had spoken of it as a weak and foolish expression; that the words, *a Judge of Hell*, were nothing but a quotation from Virgil,

Castigatque auditque dolos, subigitque fateri,

which the Hon. Gentleman had thought fit to translate into very vulgar English, and then fixed his own English words upon *Mr. Burke*. There was another instance, more material than all the rest, on which he could aver with positive certainty, and would be ready to do so in a court of justice, if it were necessary, on which the Hon. Gentleman was most completely mistaken; namely, when he asserted that his Right Hon. Friend had treated a vote of the House (in which some expression he had used relative to Sir Elijah Impey had been disavowed and disapproved of) with levity and disrespect. This charge, *Mr. Francis* affirmed, was not true, and that there was not the smallest ground or pretence for it: That, on the contrary, when his Right Hon. Friend mentioned this vote in Westminster-hall, he did it in terms of the greatest deference and respect, and with a most singular choice and

propriety of language; for the truth of which Mr. Francis appealed to Mr. Fox.

Mr. Francis then observed, that Gentlemen who laid such mighty stress on casual expressions, or other little circumstances not essential to the conduct of so heavy and so laborious a business as the impeachment, should have been particularly cautious in stating the facts with the utmost accuracy; and finally, that even if it had been true, that any inconsiderate or even passionate expression had escaped any of the Managers, which he was far from admitting, it would be no objection to the vote of thanks then proposed. This vote expressed nothing but to thank the Managers for their faithful management in their discharge of the trust reposed in them, and neither did nor could be supposed to bind the House to adopt every individual word used by the Managers in their pleadings; and that therefore, unless it could be stated and proved, that their management had been *unfaithful*, which had not been attempted, nor even pretended, the House could not justly refuse their assent to the resolution as it stood proposed.

Mr. Fox, contrary to his intention, found himself obliged to say a few words. He disclaimed all separation between the rest of the Managers and the Right Hon. Member, so eminently qualified, not only by nature, but likewise by his particular study and attention, to be, as he was termed, their leader in this business, and with whom it was their boast and glory to be identified. As to the imputation of using harsh terms, he did not conceive, that the Managers were chosen for their capabilities in courtly phrases; and as to persisting to think the fate of Nundcomar a murder, if there was any blame in it, it was his, for it was he, and not Mr. Burke, who had so expressed himself before the Lords, subsequent to the censure passed upon Mr. Burke by the House; and he was yet to learn, how any vote of that, or any other House, however it might controul his words or actions, was to shackle his thoughts or opinions.

Mr. Law rose after Mr. Fox, and said, that it was unnecessary for him to say much more than to confirm the statement of his two Hon. Friends, Mr. Sumner and Mr. Wigley, which he did most completely; nor could he suppress his surprise and astonishment at the conduct of Gentlemen of character, whose talents he revered, in attempting to excuse the leading Manager, by asserting that, in some instances, his expressions had been misrepresented. Mr. Law solemnly affirmed that they were not; that the English language did not afford expressions more gross, violent, abusive, and indecent, than those which

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the Manager had used. If any passage in his speech could be called sublime and beautiful, it was at best but sublime and beautiful nonsense; at other times his expressions were so vulgar and illiberal, that the lowest blackguard in a bear-garden would have been ashamed to utter them. He was indeed surprised that a Right Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Fox) should condescend to mix his character with that of the leading Manager. Mr. Law said, he had been a very constant attendant upon the trial, and he had often seen the Right Hon. Gentleman exert his great abilities in support of the cause assigned to him, and as often excited in order to correct the follies and intemperance of the leading Manager. Whatever his abilities might be, he was totally unfit to conduct a public trial. His violence, his passion, and his obstinacy, were unconquerable; and as for his supposed information, he was really astonished that a man who had been twenty-two years employed in Indian inquiries should still be so very ignorant of India. His prejudices had totally warped his judgment. The feeling of the Public, Mr. Law said, would not, and could not, be changed by a vote of that House. Many thousand persons of both sexes had heard the closing speech of the Hon. Manager, which had lasted nine days. His expressions could not be mistaken; and he was confident that if the minutes of the short-hand writers were called for, it would appear that the terms he used, instead of being less, were more illiberal, outrageous, and offensive, than his Hon. Friends had represented them to be. They were universally reprobated from the first characters amongst the numerous audience that had heard them, down to the messengers, door-keepers, and guards. In that House, Mr. Law said, Gentlemen would not speak out; but he knew that they condemned the conduct of the leading Manager as much as he did; but observed that he was not to be controuled, and that opposition only made him the more violent. Mr. Law said, the Manager had treated the Court as ill as he had done Mr. Hastings. To the truth of the various quotations, one excepted, which was of an old date, he bore the fullest testimony. The expressions were used in this year, and all of them within a month. The context in no instance could take away from the grossness or illiberality of the expressions. It was disgraceful to the House, and scandalous to the cause of justice, that the most atrocious libels should be uttered against Gentlemen whose conduct was not in question, and who, consequently, could not defend themselves. Amongst the Gentlemen with whose characters the Manager had made so free, there was one very old and intimate friend of his own, Major Osborne, a Gentleman of as fair and honourable a character as any in England, and a

man who knew how to defend himself. It was highly unjust in the House, and highly impolitic, to afford their sanction in the slightest degree to any of the abominable calumnies that were uttered. It involved them in injustice, inconsistency, and absurdity. It degraded the national character most unjustly throughout Europe. Barrere in the National Convention had the other day detailed as fact, an infamous falsehood, which party malice had invented many years ago; he meant the accusation that the English were the authors of the dreadful famine that raged so fatally in Bengal in the year 1770. At that time, Mr. Law said, he was in Bengal, and he affirmed most solemnly that every exertion was made by the British government to lessen the shocking miseries which the people sustained, not from any mismanagement of the government, which was then in the hands of Mahomed Reza Cawn, but from a failure in the periodical rains; that every civil servant of the Company, every British officer at every military station, and every Englishman throughout Bengal, exerted himself to alleviate the distresses of the people. The most liberal subscriptions were entered into, and every personal exertion used, to procure grain wherever it could be found; yet some modern historians had represented the English as the cause of that famine, and as insensible of the miseries it brought upon the people.

In the same style of misrepresentation did the leading Manager, in the first year of this trial, introduce a story, which resounded through Europe, to the disgrace and scandal of this nation; he meant the story of Deby Sing. Mr. Law said, that on its being told, he affirmed that it could not be true. He knew that cruelty was no part of an Englishman's character in any country, and as little so in India as any part of the world. This justice he was sure the Noble Marquis would do to his countrymen; for he was too high and too honourable a character to conceal the truth, because men of great consideration in this country had been misled. The Noble Marquis had shewn himself to be superior to those follies and prejudices which had distinguished so many persons in England.

The leading Manager had implicated a very intimate friend of his in the story of Deby Sing; he meant Sir John Shore, whom the minister had selected to govern Bengal. He had described that Gentleman as an accomplice in the crimes of Mr. Hastings, and had gone so far in folly as to remonstrate to the Directors on their appointing him Governor-General of Bengal.

Mr. Law said, that when he heard the Manager tell this story with so much confidence in Westminster-hall, he was
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sure from his own knowledge of the country that the story could not be true; but his regard for Sir John Shore, and his zeal for the honour of his country, induced him to sift the business to the bottom. He went most carefully and attentively through all those volumes which the Manager had in his possession also, and he boldly challenged the most inventive malice of the most malicious man that ever existed to affix blame either upon Mr. Hastings or Sir John Shore for any concern they had in that transaction. The fact was shortly this; a district was rented for two years to a man of the name of Deby Sing, and let out again by him to under farmers. This man had been for years employed in the revenue line, and was much esteemed both by Sir John Shore and Mr. Anderfon.

The first year the rents were regularly paid; in the second there were complaints of great severities having been used in the collection of the revenue. The first and the only act done by Mr. Hastings throughout the whole business, was to order Deby Sing to be removed, and that in so hasty a manner, as to expose himself to the charge of having acted with too much severity to him. A Gentleman was deputed to receive the complaints of the natives, Mr. Paterfon, of whom the world has heard so much, and who was so little pleased with the extravagant encomiums of the leading Manager, that he has publicly disavowed them, and has publicly expressed concern that his reports should have been tortured into evidence against Mr. Hastings, who had no sort of concern in the business; but was most anxious to detect the enormities of Deby Sing, and to punish him.

Mr. Paterfon transmitted to Calcutta all the complaints he had received, and amongst them were statements of cruelties practised upon certain of the natives, too shocking to be repeated. These complaints arrived when Mr. Hastings was absent, and the Board appointed a committee of the Company's servants (all senior to Mr. Paterfon, and not junior, as the Manager stated) to sift this business to the bottom. The Commissioners were sworn, and the examinations were taken upon oath. Their commission did not terminate until long after Mr. Hastings was in England; and the result of the fullest examination was, that the most dreadful of the cruelties charged never were committed at all, and that for such severities as were exercised, no possible blame could attach upon any English Gentleman. Such, Mr. Law affirmed, was the true state of the case; and it was a disgrace to the House of Commons that the leading Manager should have travelled out of his indictment, in order to utter his calumnies against Sir John Shore, and the public servants employed in the revenue line.

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Mr. Law lamented exceedingly that so superior a man as Mr. Fox, since he had accepted the office of a Manager, had not condescended to examine and to judge for himself before he spoke. Had he ever himself looked into the history of Deby Sing, he never could have justified for a moment the conduct of the leading Manager.

Nor was this, said Mr. Law, the only instance in which the leading Manager had quitted the articles entrusted to him, in order to indulge the malignity of his own disposition. He had lately described Mr. Hastings as a man of low, vulgar, and obscure origin, whose occupations had been base, mean, and sordid. If it were of any consequence in this free country, and at this period, for a man to value himself upon the accidental circumstance of family, Mr. Hastings might have as fair grounds to boast of his family as any gentleman in the House. Such topics were ridiculous; but that from such a man as the Manager a word should be uttered on the subject of low, mean, and obscure origin, was indeed most extraordinary; the Manager, of all men living, ought to have avoided such a topic. Mr. Hastings, the Manager said, had been a fraudulent bullock contractor in the year 1761. This was downright calumny. Where was the charge voted by the House, or where the evidence, that entitled him to make such an assertion? Indeed, said Mr. Law, the Manager, in his closing speech of nine days, wasted five of them upon points that had not the most distant relation to the cause entrusted to him by the House; and the more he considered his conduct, the more was he convinced, that from 1788 to this day, he had systematically, for some purpose or other, delayed the close of the trial to as late a period as he possibly could, to the abuse of public justice, at a most enormous expence to the nation, and to the manifest inconvenience of all ranks of people. Every thing he had done was for the purpose of delay. The House collectively had not attended, and therefore could not judge; but such Gentlemen as had heard the Manager examining witnesses, keeping some of them four days together, asking questions that had no relation to the points in issue, or putting the same questions over and over again, must be convinced that delay, and delay alone, was his object. No words, Mr. Law said, could convey to Gentlemen who had not heard his closing speech an adequate idea of it—it lasted nine days—two were employed in going through the Benares, and two in going over the Begum article: A most indecent proceeding, Mr. Law said, in his opinion, and a very poor compliment to the Managers, who had well and ably performed their duties; a proceeding that could have no other effect than to weaken the

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the force of their observations. Such was the universal remark. Another day was wasted in part by remarks on that article, which the Right Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Fox) had enforced by every argument that talents, eloquence, and ingenuity could bring forward, and which well merited the most serious attention of every man. Mr. Law said, though he differed in opinion with Mr. Fox, yet he must do him the justice to say, that all that man could do to support the cause he had done. But here again the leading Manager must interfere; he must destroy as far as he could the effect produced by Mr. Fox's speech: He went over the ground again, until listlessness, fatigue, and disgust, were apparent in every countenance. The remaining four days were wasted by the Manager upon points that had no sort of relation to the charge, improper at any time to have been agitated, but when dwelt upon in a speech in reply, which ought to be confined to remarks upon evidence before the Court, in the highest degree indecent and irregular. Part of the time was wasted in reading papers that were not in evidence, and in blackening the characters of Gentlemen who could not defend themselves. What then could the Manager mean, but to scatter his calumnies as wide as he could, and to continue the trial to the latest possible moment? Mr. Law said, and it was well known, that he had no sort of connexion with Mr. Hastings, and that he had in India disapproved of some of his political measures; beyond this he had never gone, as an Hon. Member (Mr. Francis) well knew. On political subjects he had differed with Mr. Hastings, but never upon any one of the four points on which the impeachment rested. On those points he never had but one opinion; and he believed the mind of every fair and impartial man in the kingdom was made up as to Mr. Hastings. He was confident that Mr. Hastings in no one act of his public life had been warped by interested or by malicious motives. One good effect this trial would have—it would convince his countrymen how grossly they had been imposed upon, and they would be less liable to imposition in future.

Mr. Law concluded by saying, that as he thought the conduct of the leading Manager throughout the trial had entailed shame and disgrace upon the House of Commons, he should vote most heartily for the previous question.

Mr. Fox, in explanation, declared, that what he had said on the topic alluded to, was the result of a full consideration of the subject, and not from the hearsay of any person whatever; and what, were the same occasions to occur, he should not hesitate to say again: But if it was from hearsay only that he had his information, he wondered how the Hon. Member came

came to know that circumstance; but he could tell him, the fact was quite the reverse.

Mr. Anstruther supported the conduct of *Mr. Burke*, and said, that though the leading Manager originally had told the story of *Deby Sing*, yet it was another Right Hon. Gentleman (*Mr. Fox*) and himself who proposed to give evidence upon it, thinking they might make *Mr. Hastings* responsible for the acts of *Deby Sing*. It was true, the court had unanimously rejected the evidence; but he still retained his own opinion on that, and on other points of evidence, which had been rejected.

Mr. Sumner spoke in explanation; he wished, if any one Gentleman doubted his veracity, to refer to the minutes of the short-hand writer, as the only criterion by which they could determine who was right in the statement of the language used by the Right Hon. Manager; and upon this point, he declared himself willing to meet any of those Gentlemen who considered it in a different point of view from him.

Mr. Sheridan supported the conduct of *Mr. Burke*; he said, that if the question was merely whether the Managers merited the thanks of the House or not, he should not vote on the occasion; but the motion for the previous question on the ground on which it was moved, viz. for the purpose of throwing a reflection on the conduct of one of the Committee, changed its nature entirely, and he therefore should feel it his duty to remain in the House with those who opposed it.

The question was then put, and on the division the numbers were,

<i>For the previous question,</i>	-	21
<i>Noes,</i>	-	55
		—
<i>Majority</i>		34

The question of thanks was then put, when the numbers on the division were,

<i>Ayes</i>	-	50
<i>Noes</i>	-	21
		—
<i>Majority</i>		29

The usual motion, that the Speaker do give the thanks of the House to the Managers in their places, was then put and carried; and the Speaker addressed the Managers in the following speech:

" Gentlemen,

" It is my duty to communicate to you the thanks of this
 " House, for the manner in which you have discharged a most
 " arduous trust, on an occasion highly interesting to the
 " honour and justice of the nation.

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" The subject, to which your attention has been directed, was intricate and extensive beyond example: You have proved, that it was well suited to your industry and eloquence, the exertions of which have conferred honour, not on yourselves only, but on this House, whose credit is intimately connected with your own. A forcible admonition has been given, on this occasion, to all persons in situations of high and important national trust, that they can neither be removed by distance, or sheltered by power, from the vigilance and authority of this House, which is possessed of no privilege more important, than that by which it is enabled to bring public delinquents to the bar of public justice, and thus to preserve, or rescue from dishonour, the *British* name and character.

" But in addressing you on this occasion, and in considering the beneficial consequences to be expected from this proceeding, it is impossible not to advert to the increased security which the constitution has derived in the course of it, from the recognition and full confirmation of the principle, that an impeachment is not discontinued by a dissolution of Parliament; a principle essential to the privileges of this House, and to the independent and effectual administration of public justice.

" Under these impressions, suggested by the nature and importance of your trust, and by the manner in which you have discharged it, I obey, with the utmost satisfaction, the commands of this House, by stating to you their resolution,

' That the thanks of this House be given to the Members who were appointed the Managers of the Impeachment against Warren Hastings, Esq. for their faithful management in their discharge of the trust reposed in them.'

The Chancellor of the Exchequer moved, that the Speaker do print his speech.

Mr. Burke said, that by the orders of the House, when the thanks were given, he and his brother Managers were tongue-tied, and had no means whereby to express their gratitude but by their submission to those orders. But he thought he should be wanting in gratitude if he did not, the moment the penalty of silence was removed, seize the first opportunity to express his own satisfaction, and that of his fellow Managers, on the occasion. They had laboured to discharge their duty, they had completed the task, and they were paid by the thanks of that House, the first reward men could receive. Next to the thanks he must notice the very dignified and elegant manner in which the Speaker had discharged that task, in

which he consulted not only the grandeur and dignity of that House, but at the same time politeness and attention to them. He then entered into a short defence of the conduct of the impeachment. He assured the House, that no asperity of remark should provoke him to say a word, that prejudices arising from personal friendship, or from a sense of personal obligations, were too laudable for him to be discomposed at: He would only assure the House, that he had thrown no general reflections on the Company's servants, having merely repeated what Mr. Hastings himself had said of the troops serving in Oude; and it would be found by referring to the 12th and 13th articles, that the House had marked their opinion of the officers serving in Oude, in the very terms that he had used; and as for the other expressions, they had been very much misrepresented.

Mr. Law, in reply to *Mr. Burke*, said, that he desired not to be included amongst those Gentlemen, if any such there were, which he did not believe, who acted either from early prejudices, or from a sense of favours received; he was as independent of *Mr. Hastings* as of the two Right Hon. Gentlemen who were united upon the present question; and he gave his vote from the firmest conviction that he was right, and that instead of thanks, the leading Manager merited the reprobation of every man who had the honour of the House and of the country at heart: He was, indeed, sorry to see the Right Hon. Gentleman (*Mr. Fox*), whom he much respected, acting in the present instance under such a leader. He knew what the sense of the country was, and no vote of that House, though supported by all the influence both of the Minister and of the Opposition, could change the public mind, or convince the people of the propriety of the conduct of the leading Manager. With regard to his having misrepresented any one expression used by the leading Manager in Westminster Hall, he was confident he had not, and that if the minutes of the short-hand writer were referred to, it would be found, that he had been infinitely more abusive and violent than he had been represented in the quotations that were made. *Mr. Law* repeated, that no contradiction, let it come from what quarter it would, could have the slightest effect in this case; it was impossible to mistake what so many thousands had heard, what so many thousands had reprobated, and which, as he said before, excited no other sentiments than those of contempt and indignation in the minds of the auditors, from persons of the highest rank down to the door-keepers, guards, and porters, attending in and about Westminster Hall.

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LORD HOOD.

Mr. Secretary Dundas called the attention of the House to the notice which he had given, of moving the thanks of that House to Lord Hood, for the important services he had rendered the country by the capture of Bastia. An Hon. Member (*Mr. Sheridan*), when he had given his notice, had intimated an intention to oppose it; but as he had since then had sufficient time for inquiry into the real merits of the case, he hoped that he should hear him retract that opinion, and forego his intended opposition. At all events, he should not enter into the particular statement of the advantages obtained, unless he should feel it necessary from any observations or opposition which might be offered. He was not aware of the opposition to be offered, and therefore he should content himself for the present with barely making his motion. If any material observations should be made against it, he hoped the House would indulge him with a hearing. He then moved, "That the thanks of the House be given to Lord Hood for the important services he has rendered to his country by his able and gallant conduct in the expedition to Corsica."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer seconded the motion.

Mr. Sheridan said, that he did not conceive what right the Right Hon. Gentleman had to assume that he had changed his opinion with respect to Lord Hood. If justice were to be done to him, he believed he should be found to be one of those that were very cautious in throwing out a pledge or promise one day, and shrinking from it the next. He wished, from all his heart, that, on the present occasion, he had substantial reasons for changing his opinion; and he really thought, from the notice which he had given as often as Lord Hood's name was mentioned, that the Right Hon. Gentleman would have thought it worth his while to have introduced his motion with a few arguments which might have induced him, if not entirely to change his opinion, at least to think more favourably of Lord Hood; but the Right Hon. Gentleman had not stated any ground whatever, upon which he moved for the thanks to the Noble Admiral. Probably the fame of his victories, and the general approbation with which they were received by the Public at large, had rendered any statement to the House superfluous; or, perhaps, it might be considered a kind of insult to enter into a detail of facts so notorious as the splendid and valuable successes of his Lordship. When the thanks of that House were to be voted to Lord Howe, the Right Hon. Gentleman felt it incumbent upon him to make some short statement of the services performed by that Noble Lord,

though no man could be a stranger to the fact, that he had rendered his country the most essential services, and made her prouder in her security. With regard to Sir Charles Grey and Sir John Jervis, the Right Hon. Gentleman had also found it necessary to give some short account of their splendid services, which followed one so quick upon the heels of another, as to astonish the most experienced and sanguine commander; the value of the conquests made by those gallant officers was not to be estimated by their value in any other war than the present. In this he could not consider them of equal estimation. When he came to Lord Hood, as if his services were so conspicuous that they precluded every introduction of the kind, the Right Hon. Gentleman simply moved for the thanks of the House, adding, however, that he would reserve himself for any argument that could be advanced in opposition to his motion, as if it were impossible to adduce any. He sincerely regretted, Mr. Sheridan said, that he had no reason to change his opinion; so far from it, that he should feel it necessary to oppose the motion of thanks to the Noble Admiral, to whose gallant and able conduct, upon many other occasions, he was ready to bear testimony: But as thanks were the sole reward that House had it in its power to bestow, and were at the same time the most ample and most honourable reward any man could receive, he thought it fitting that due regard should be had to preserve their value and importance, and not to diminish and fritter them away by bestowing them upon trifling occasions, or upon persons who had not really merited them. The circumstance of his having himself received the thanks of the House that night, might be perhaps considered as some reason why he should not oppose the same favour being bestowed on another; but it was to be recollected, that he was one of many appointed to perform a task which they had executed to the extent of their ability; that they had gone through their labour, and received their reward, which, as long as its value is preserved by never granting it but on great and necessary occasions, is certainly the greatest and most honourable reward that man can receive; that the House had a constant eye over their conduct and behaviour on the occasion, and were competent to judge of their merit or demerit; but it was something different with regard to admirals and generals employed upon foreign service, whose conduct his Majesty, through his ministers, might know, but of which, except by information also from them, the House could form no judgment whatever. There was another circumstance, of which it was hardly necessary for him to remind Gentlemen, that, in giving a vote of thanks, that House was only the organ

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of the public voice, it only echoed back the public wish: This was plain in the case of Lord Howe: As soon as the success of that gallant commander was known, it could be read in every countenance; it was lighted up in the public eye; every heart beat in unison on the thought of our success on our native element; and it was easy to foresee, that a vote of thanks would be the immediate result. Was this the case with Lord Hood? He took Toulon: Did the people rejoice? He was beat out of Toulon, in a manner the most disgraceful to the British name. He took *Fiorenzo*: Did the people rejoice? He then took Bastia: Did the people rejoice? Nay, did his Majesty's ministers expect it when they received an account of the reduction of Bastia? He was fully persuaded, that his Majesty's ministers never entertained the least idea of moving the thanks of that House to Lord Hood, if Lord Howe's victory had not taken place. The moment that was announced, his Majesty's ministers immediately began to contrive how Lord Hood's little cock-boat, his Bastia, might be taken into the wake of Lord Howe's fleet, and by that means pursue the triumph, and partake the gale of that illustrious commander. Lord Hood had sailed with one of the finest fleets that ever left our shore, and what he had done within this last twelvemonth he should be glad to know. He would ask, why was not the present measure adopted sooner? Why not at the time of the news of the capture of Bastia having arrived? It seemed to him as if ministers intended to lessen the rewards conferred on those who had done great and important services, by giving the same to officers who had not performed any. He was not at all apprehensive that Lord Howe, and the other officers, would feel any envy at these thanks being given to Lord Hood, because they were conscious of meriting all that could be bestowed on them, supposing the thanks to be ever so valuable; and if these thanks should become so common as to be of no value, they could not have any envy on account of bestowing on others that which they themselves thought worth nothing. There could not, therefore, be any sensation of envy felt by Lord Howe, or Sir John Jervis, or Sir Charles Grey, on thanks being given to Lord Hood. But the case was not quite so clear on the question of envy, by Lord Hood, on hearing that thanks were given to them: On the contrary, he believed that these thanks were now proposed to avoid the envy of Lord Hood; and he believed that had it not been for the thanks to Lord Howe, which were indeed due for a brilliant action, we should have heard nothing about thanks to Lord Hood. He called on ministers to declare whether they had
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any idea of thanking Lord Hood, before the general voice demanded thanks to Lord Howe?

From the manner in which the motion was worded, he perceived that the vote was entirely confined to that Noble Lord's expedition to Corsica; not a word of Toulon. Ministers had prudently thrown a veil over that infamous transaction: But he hoped the time was not very remote, when that veil would be removed, and the whole of that business exhibited in its native deformity. Rumour had said much on the subject; nay, it went so far as to state, that Lord Hood was informed by officers of the first military skill, that Toulon was not tenable, at the very time that he was promising and pledging himself to this country that it was; and that, if all the rest of the town should be taken, he was certain Fort Malgue could not. What was the result? a precipitate retreat in the night; and the first notice the poor inhabitants, who had placed themselves under the protection of the British flag, had of it, was from the fire of one of the ships in the harbour of Toulon. What words could describe their amazement? Deserted by those in whom they placed their most implicit confidence, they were left in the midst of night to scramble for their safety at the distance of five miles. Mr. Sheridan dwelt very particularly on these points, and hinted, that it was his intention to move an inquiry into the transaction on a future day, declaring, that every one of the enemy's ships which Lord Hood left behind, was in itself a charge against him, as he promised to take those ships in trust for the young King of France, or to destroy them. Lord Hood had not only been sent into the Mediterranean with the best appointed fleet that ever sailed from the British shore, but he had also the assistance of the Spanish fleet, or should have had it; or if he had it not, Administration were reprehensible in forming alliances with powers who did not adhere to the terms of the treaties in which they engaged: He had employed a whole year, and had not yet effected his object; for if the reduction of Corsica was his object, it had not been effected. Even as to Bastia, what had the Noble Lord done? Look at the articles of capitulation; they seemed to have been acceded to with a degree of precipitation, as if his Lordship was afraid that any of our allies should share in the glory of the reduction of that place. Something yet remained to be done by Lord Hood, before his present acquisitions could be said to be of any value. Calvi was yet to be taken; and when that event took place, it would be time enough to give him the thanks of that House.

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Mr. Sheridan drew a comparison between the services rendered by Lord Hood, and those performed by Lord Howe, Sir Charles Grey, and Sir John Jervis, who had in so short a time performed so much. The cordiality which subsisted between the naval and military forces, had been made in the thanks to those officers one ground of the motion; but if he had not been much misinformed, the reverse was the case at Bastia; and he instanced the situation of Colonel Lumsden to prove this point. Seven thousand land forces had arrived to his Lordship's assistance at the time that he was entering into articles of capitulation for the surrender of the place; but this did not retard the negotiation; and he entered into articles highly disadvantageous and reprehensible, for he consented to land all the garrison at Toulon, that they might be employed against our ally the King of Sardinia, or assist at the siege of Turin; and we should recollect, that we were bound by treaty to persist in the war until all that Prince's territories shall be restored to him.

He in strong terms reprobated the offer of the constitution of 1789 to the people of Toulon, and the vain offer of protection given them. He contended that the faith and honour of the British nation received an irreparable stroke through his Lordship's conduct at Toulon. He could not conceive upon what ground the Right Hon. Gentleman could have supposed him to have retracted his opinion upon this subject, when early in the session he had intimated his intention of moving an inquiry into his Lordship's conduct on that occasion.

Lord Hood was also a great politician as well as a great naval commander; he had his Commissioners at Toulon, published his proclamation, &c. He did not like those kind of intriguing amphibious admirals, with one foot on land, and another on sea; when they turned politicians, they appeared to him to have got out of their element. He liked the fine, open, manly character of a British tar, that delighted in hard knocks and deep water. He recollected some time since to have met with a plain, honest elector of Westminster, who asked him what he thought of Lord Hood's conduct at Toulon? In answer to his question, he told him, that he thought it very strange. "Yes, yes," said the elector, "when his Lordship comes home, I think we ought to demand a *scrutiny*."

Mr. Sheridan protested, that he wished Lord Hood was present; he really did think it a very unpleasant task to censure any man in his absence. He therefore called upon ministers to defer the question till the arrival of the Noble Lord, and if he could explain his conduct in a satisfactory manner, he should be the first to join in a vote of thanks to him. Upon the

the whole, though he felt himself bound to oppose this motion, yet he wished to do it in the least disrespectful manner to the Noble Admiral; therefore he should move the *previous question*.

Mr. Fox seconded the motion. He said, his situation was peculiarly delicate in opposing the thanks of the House to the Noble Lord, as he had been engaged in political contests with him, and those of a nature the most likely to produce acrimony and ill-blood for the time; but every person who knew him would do him the justice to say, that his conduct on the present occasion could not be influenced by any other motive, than by a zealous wish to discharge what he conceived to be his duty to the Public. He had had the honour, upon a former occasion, to vote the thanks of that House to the Noble Lord, when he had acted in conjunction with Lord Rodney in the West Indies. His duty, however, called upon him at this time to vote for the previous question. He thought ministers ought to have stated precisely what it was they were about to thank the Noble Lord for: If it was the conquest of Corsica, certainly the taking of Bastia did not complete that; and while any part of that enterprise remained uncompleted, it would have been as well to refrain from voting the thanks of that House, which had always been considered the highest mark of honour which could be conferred upon any person to whom they were given. The thanks which had been voted a few nights before, he was sure, proceeded from the most unanimous and general sense both of that House and the Country at large; so much so, that every body would have been astonished had it been omitted to bring the motion forward upon the very first opportunity. The thanks moved this day, if they were any ways merited, he thought, ought to have been moved for long before, because all that had been done by the Noble Lord was known and published long before the glorious victory of Earl Howe took place. He observed, that when Martinique, in the West Indies, was taken, no mention was made of thanks to the officers who commanded; and when other places of as much consequence as Bastia had been taken, Valenciennes and Condé, the illustrious General was not thanked; and therefore he considered there must be something personal in the business. It could not be said that the Duke of York was not thanked from any consideration of his rank, because many of the Royal family had been thanked by that House for public services, and felt themselves exalted by the honour. He was inclined to think that, in the whole of the business that day, there was something rather of a political than military nature. He adverted to the transactions at Toulon, which he deemed

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as disgraceful as unfortunate. With regard to the importance of Bastia, with respect to Corsica, to which the question at present entirely related, it did not to him appear to justify the present measures. He adverted to the capitulation, which did not tend to add any laurels to his success. With respect to the Noble Lord in question, he knew him to be possessed of great courage and skill, and capable of conducting the most difficult enterprises with honour to himself and advantage to his country; and he entertained that opinion of that gallant officer, that he was sure he would feel much dissatisfaction at being thanked for a service so comparatively small. Having thus given his reasons, Mr. Fox said, he wished that the previous question might be carried.

Mr. Secretary Dundas objected to the mode of opposition which was given to the present question, as proceeding more from a wish to embarrass it, than upon any other grounds. He acknowledged, that, in proposing the thanks of the House to Sir Charles Grey and Sir John Jervis, he had made a short preface to his motion; but, by a peculiar mode of reasoning, the Hon. Gentleman had censured him as severely for that mode of conduct, as he did now for making the motion without any preface at all, so that it was utterly impossible for him to please that Gentleman. The Honourable Gentleman (*Mr. Sheridan*) had charged him with endeavouring to depreciate the merit of one gallant officer by proposing to give thanks to another. He said, that, until the Hon. Gentleman gave notice of his intention to oppose this vote, he never had imagined that there could be two opinions upon the subject. He had since, indeed, seen the Hon. Gentleman's opinions stated, and he would allow very ably, in the Morning Chronicle; though he must differ very widely from the arguments used there. He had too high an opinion of British seamen; their hearts were cast in too good a mould to feel any thing like envy at the successes and victories of another.

The Hon. Gentleman had made some allusions to Toulon, which he was not called upon to answer, because the House had already given a decided opinion upon that event, which opinion was expressed in the Address to his Majesty at the commencement of the Session; and, therefore, until some proofs could be brought in support of the allegations which had been made upon this subject, he should not enter into an investigation of it. The Hon. Gentleman had alluded to a scrutiny; then of course he would allow the return to take place before the scrutiny was commenced; he would allow the vote of thanks for one branch of service, before he commenced his investigation of another. Ministers had been also accused

o postponing their vote of thanks to Lord Hood until the news of Lord Howe's victory arrived; in answer to which he begged leave to say, that he had taken the very first opportunity which occurred of giving notice upon this point; for Gentlemen would recollect, that he was prevented by an adjournment from coming forwards as soon as his wishes would have led him upon this subject. To come however to the conduct of the Noble Admiral, which had been so severely attacked, it appeared to him in a point of view very different from that of deserving censure. When he first went into the Mediterranean, his object was to preserve the trade of this country, which he did in the most effectual manner; after that he blocked up the whole French fleet in the harbour of Toulon, though much superior to him in point of number. When he afterwards undertook the siege of Bastia, it was against the advice of military officers, who thought the place too strong for their attacks, the garrison consisting of near 3000 men, and the whole land force that could be brought against it being only 1100 men. Lord Hood undertook the whole at his own risk, and succeeded: If he had failed, he would have been the object of censure for his rashness and precipitancy, by those very persons who now accused him of not having performed any service. Mr. Dundas said, he would not enter into any description of the value and importance of Corsica, but he was sure that the liberation of 200,000 souls from the tyranny of France was an act worthy of praise.

The Hon. Gentleman had alluded to the Noble Lord's being a politician. "This (said Mr. Dundas) calls to my remembrance what passed between a gentleman and me when the Hon. Gentleman intimated an intention of opposing this motion: I said to a gentleman, "What can Sheridan mean by opposing this measure?" He answered, "Why, don't you know they can never forget the *Westminster Election*?" Mr. Dundas concluded with saying, that it had fallen to his lot to propose thanks to many gallant officers with success, and hoped that upon this occasion he should be equally fortunate.

Mr. Addington said, it had been stated by an Hon. Member (Mr. Sheridan) that Lord Hood was beating his head against the barren rocks of Corsica, but he believed he had beat it to some purpose. Mr. Addington dwelt some time on the important services of Lord Hood, and was surprised that an opposition should be given to the vote.

Mr. Robinson and Mr. Law spoke in favour of it.

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Mr. Serjeant Watson said, that an Hon. Gentleman (*Mr. Sheridan*) had "let the cat out of the bag," when he came to the conclusion of his speech. He could not avoid making an allusion to the Westminster election; and thus shewed that his opposition arose from the paltry consideration of political opposition and party animosity. With respect to this business, he said, that he had the honour of an acquaintance with his Lordship at that time, whose generosity he applauded; and no insinuation that could be made against him would lead him to disapprove of those services, for which he would give his most hearty thanks and approbation.

The motion of thanks to Lord Hood was put and carried.

Mr. Secretary Dundas then moved the acknowledgments of the House to the several officers and men that were employed under Lord Hood in his successful expedition against Bastia.

Mr. Sheridan, in reply to Serjeant Watson, said, that the charge of "letting the cat out of the bag" might be retorted on that Learned Gentleman, who had been Lord Hood's counsel at the election, and probably filled his purse pretty well by the business. He said, he then rose to move an amendment to the motion just put, because he conceived it necessary that the officers who had acted under Lord Hood should have a share in the praise: He would move, "That the thanks of the House be given to Admirals Peyton, Hotham, Goodall, Sir Hyde Parker, and Crosby, and also to Lieutenant-Colonel Vilette, and other officers serving under them."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, that there was a strange particularity in the amendment, as it went to over-load a motion of thanks for services, which the Hon. Gentleman had disputed. The motion made by his Right Hon. Friend included every officer under Lord Hood. The amendment went into all the particularities without a possibility of knowing whether these officers were employed in the reduction of Bastia or not. As for Admiral Peyton, he was at present hoisting his flag in the Downs. The Hon. Gentleman, but a short time before, had said, that nothing had been done in the Mediterranean. It seemed however that he had changed his opinion, and at present thought the magnitude of the service so great, that he added a catalogue of names belonging to persons who were not there at all.

Mr. Sheridan replied, that he was concerned that there were not more mistakes in the business, as being more congenial to the proposition. In the case of Lord Howe, the Admirals were individually mentioned; but in the present instance, ministers thought fit to deviate from their former practice,

because they knew that there was a want of harmony and union between the officers employed in the reduction of Bastia. As to the error into which he had fallen, it was such as the first Lord of the Admiralty had made in another House. But he thought Colonel Villette deserved the thanks of the House, as Bastia had been reduced by starvation; and he was active in his situation, with others, in cutting off the supplies. He was of opinion, however, that it was a duty incumbent on ministers to correct the error, and specify by name the parties concerned.

Mr. Burke observed, that the present business was very like what might be agitated by persons living on the other side of the Irish Channel; where it might be said,

O'Rourke's noble feast shall ne'er be forgot
By those who were there, or those who were not.

He could not see what analogy the Westminster election had to the subject of the motion, or guess why it had been introduced, except to let on one side the *cat*, and on the other the *brief*, out of the bag. The allusion to the election reminded him of a fiction in law, which made "Bastia in the city of Westminster, in the parish of Covent Garden, and so forth," just as Gentlemen found it convenient to change the *venue*.

The importance of Bastia, *Mr. Burke* said, was great, as it secured to this country a good harbour for the protection of our trade, and would be a means of preserving the liberties of Italy against the savage tyranny of France.

Mr. Sheridan then left out the name of Admiral Peyton, and put in that of Brigadier-General Duban.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, he was not a commanding officer at the reduction of St. Fiorenzo.

Mr. Fox said, ministers should have spared his Hon. Friend the trouble of mentioning names, by including them personally in the motion. He wondered that ministers would not make known the commanders of places, and that they wished to place the name of Lord Hood alone.

Mr. Secretary Dundas replied, that he would before that time have given every information, did he not conceive that the amendments were intended to embarrass the business before the House; and he would therefore oppose them all, because the officers were all thanked together.

Mr. Fox said, they ought not to go all in a lump in that manner, so contrary to former usage. He would put in the name of Major-General Dundas.

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Mr. Rolle, General Smith, and Mr. Smith, spoke against the amendments.

The amendments were all put and negatived without a division.

The question was then put, and carried unanimously.

Mr. Secretary Dundas moved, that the several resolutions be communicated to Lord Hood by letter.—Ordered.

GUERNSEY.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer moved, That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, praying that his Majesty would be graciously pleased to give directions, that rewards be given to commissioners appointed to inquire into the civil state of the island of Guernsey, and for which that House would make provision.—Ordered.

JERSEY.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer made a similar motion with regard to the island of Jersey; which was also carried.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer moved "That the House do at its rising adjourn till Monday se'nnight."

Mr. Sheridan wished to know if there would be an opportunity of entering into any further business before the session was put an end to.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, that Parliament would probably be prorogued about the middle or the end of the week after next.

HALIFAX.

Mr. Sheridan said, there was a subject upon which the lateness of the period only prevented him from making a motion. He wished particularly to call the attention of ministers to the situation of Halifax. The Right Hon. Secretary of State must by that time be convinced, by information which he could not distrust, that what he had stated early in the session, respecting the unprotected state in which that valuable colony had been left, was strictly true, and that the accounts upon which ministers had relied were rash and unfounded. He wished to know, whether ministers had lately received any dispatches from that quarter.

Mr. Secretary Dundas said, he had received no such information as the Hon. Gentleman alluded to.

Mr. Sheridan said, such information had been transmitted by a numerous body of the inhabitants of Halifax, and it was the duty of those to whom it was transmitted to have communicated it to ministers. He would take care that it should be commu-

communicated, and ministers would find that his representations were strictly true; that they had been received at Halifax with applause and thanks; and the answer made to them by the Secretary of State, with surprise not unmixed with indignation. The Right Hon. Gentleman had treated Lord Dorchester's answer to the Indians of Lower Canada, when first mentioned in the House, as a thing he had never heard of, and yet it turned out to be authentic. So would be found the information which he then gave him.

The London Militia Bill was read a third time, and passed.
Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY, June 23.

CITY MILITIA BILL.

Sir Watkin Lewes and others brought up from the Commons the Bill for regulating the Militia of the City of London.

The Bill was read a first and second time; the question put for committing it, which passed in the negative, and the Bill was ordered to be read a third time on Monday next, to which day their Lordships adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY, June 30.

The City Militia Bill was read a third time, and passed.

The Duke of Leeds, Chairman of the Lords' Committee, appointed to inspect the buildings and avenues adjoining, and to take into consideration the state of the House, and to suggest such plans as were necessary to make the same more commodious for the Members, gave in their Report, and the same being agreed to, it was moved, "That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty to give orders accordingly;" which passed *nem. diff.*

Lord Sydney then moved, "That the House do adjourn to Monday the 7th of July."

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, June 30.

The Speaker reported the answer of Earl Howe to the thanks of that House transmitted to him on the 16th instant, for the glorious

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glorious victory obtained over the French fleet on the 1st of the present month; which was as follows:

" SIR,

Queen Charlotte, at Spithead, 2d June.

" Favoured with your letter of the 17th, and the communication of the resolutions of the House of Commons, on the happy event of the late actions between his Majesty's ships under my command and the Brest fleet, I am to request you will have the goodness to assure the House of the most sensible impression I shall ever retain of the honour thereby conferred upon me. From which conviction that earnest endeavours may thus in the indulgent sentiments of the House obtain the applause due to eminent services, great encouragement will naturally result for exciting future naval commanders to merit such testimonies of approbation.

" The appointment of the House to make those resolutions known which regard the commendable exertions of the Admirals, Captains, and inferior officers, seamen, and soldiers, of the fleet, will be conformed to without delay.

" I am further to intreat that you, Sir, will be pleased to accept of my very grateful thanks for the obliging terms in which you have signified those declarations of the House to me, and that you will be persuaded of the great respect with which

I have the honour to remain,

SIR,

Your most obedient and most humble servant,

To the Right Hon.

" HOWE."

the Speaker of the House of Commons.

A new writ was ordered to be issued for the borough of Orford, in the room of the Earl of Yarmouth, now called to the House of Peers.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer reported, That his Majesty had been waited upon with certain addresses of that House, and that he had been graciously pleased to say he should give directions accordingly.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer moved, " That the papers presented, sealed up, by Mr. Secretary Dundas, and referred by that House to the Committee of Secrecy, be returned to the office of the Secretary of State."—Ordered.

The House then adjourned to Monday, July 7.

HOUSE

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MONDAY, July 7.

Lord Amberst moved, "That the further consideration of the Trial of Warren Hastings should be postponed to the second Tuesday in the next session of Parliament;" which being put, was carried.

Lord Amberst moved, "That the House do adjourn to Friday next."

The Earl of Lauderdale observed, that the present situation of affairs required that some proposition should be offered to their Lordships for consideration, previous to the prorogation of Parliament, and therefore he submitted to the House the propriety of meeting a day earlier than that of the intended prorogation, which of course was Thursday next, as he had no reason to apprehend that Parliament would be allowed to sit after Friday next. He then moved, by way of amendment, that Thursday be inserted in the motion instead of Friday.

The amendment being put and negatived, and the Lord Chancellor having put the question on the original motion for Friday,

The Duke of Norfolk entered the House. His Grace said, he should be happy to understand from any of his Majesty's ministers, that it was not intended to advise the Crown to prorogue the Parliament before an opportunity should be had for coming to some resolutions on our present continental affairs. Some time ago we had an agreeable view of our contest with the enemy; he meant the victory obtained over them by our fleet, but since that time the prospect of the war had become a very gloomy one; he did not mean to say that that part of the allied powers, officers and men, that came under the denomination of British, would not do their duty; on the contrary, he was confident they would; but there were others whose duty it was to be as eager at least as ourselves, of whose sincerity, in the present conjuncture, he doubted. He believed it was not now to be regarded as a secret that the King of Prussia abandoned altogether not only the spirit, but also the very terms, of the last treaty between him and this country. Their Lordships would recollect, that a subsidy, to an immense amount, was agreed to be paid to that monarch; part of which he had actually received, and now he was to withdraw himself entirely from the contest. All this money must hereafter be raised by taxes, and taken out of the pockets of the people of this country; and for which, as it now appeared,

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peared, no service whatever was to be rendered. This being the situation of our affairs, he thought it the duty of that House to address his Majesty, praying that he may be graciously pleased to allow them to continue sitting for some further time, in order that they may be enabled to deliberate on important affairs. The only thing that he could now do, was that of giving notice, that on Friday next he should bring forward a proposition to the effect he had already alluded to, unless he should in the interim receive such information from any of his Majesty's ministers as should render his intended motion unnecessary; for indeed it appeared to him to be highly unworthy the justice and discretion of that House to prefer the ease and pleasure of its Members, to the exercise of its duty on important public affairs; and that too at a time when many of the brave officers and sailors, who fought for us so nobly, and so gloriously conquered on the first of June, were languishing under their bleeding wounds, and some of them dying, for this, to them, was an inclement season. It would be disgraceful, his Grace thought, for that House to neglect its duty at such a crisis; he therefore begged it to be understood, that he should have a motion to make on Friday, for an address to his Majesty, to continue the sitting of Parliament, &c.

The Earl of Lauderdale moved, by way of amendment to the motion before the House, "That this House do at its rising adjourn to Friday next." He did this, the Noble Earl said, to afford the Noble Duke an opportunity, by continuing the sitting of the House, to open more fully, if his Grace pleased, the subject of his motion, and the particular circumstances which made it necessary.

This amendment was put and negatived.

The Earl of Lauderdale then reprobated, in severe terms, this sort of precipitancy in carrying on, or rather passing by, the proper business of the House; he thought the present an alarming crisis to this country from the aspect of its continental affairs. He thought the Public would be but little satisfied with such conduct as the present, and he trusted, that if certain Noble Lords had any particle left of that regard to order and decorum which always ought to distinguish that House, and constantly to attend its proceedings, they would agree to the amendment which he was about to move; otherwise, perhaps, the whole discussion intended to be brought forward by the Noble Duke on Friday, might be entirely prevented. He therefore moved, that to the motion for adjournment to Friday next be added, "and that the Lords be summoned."

The Lord Chancellor observed, that the complaint of the Noble Earl, as to the precipitancy of ministers upon this occasion,

sion, was premature, for that in proposing his amendment he had not specified any thing that was intended to be moved. The Noble Duke indeed had stated a proposition, which was clear and intelligible, and he dared say their Lordships would attend to hear it on the day named.

The Duke of Norfolk expressed himself satisfied with a general understanding that their Lordships would attend on Friday.

The Earl of Lauderdale's amendment was then negatived, and their Lordships adjourned to Friday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, July 7.

Six public Bills and one private received the Royal Assent by commission.

The Speaker issued his warrant to the Clerk of the Crown for two new writs; one for the borough of Castle Rising, in the room of Henry Drummond, Esq. deceased; and the other for the city of Norwich, in the room of the Right Hon. William Windham, who has accepted of the Chiltern Hundreds.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. Long moved, that the House do adjourn till Friday the 11th.

When the *Speaker* put the question on that motion,

Mr. Sheridan said, he did not understand what his Majesty's ministers meant by adjourning the House in that manner from day to day. It might have been expected that in such a situation of the country as the present, ministers would have thought it no derogation from their dignity to attend their duty in the House on the last day of the session in which it was likely any business could be done. There were many points respecting which Members of that House were bound to ask for information; information which their constituents in the several parts of the country would have a right to demand. If there had been any person present to have assured him that Parliament was not to be prorogued on Friday, he should not have opposed the adjournment till that day; but there being no one in the House who could give him that assurance, he felt it to be his duty to move an amendment to the motion, by leaving out the word *Friday*, and substituting *Thursday* in its place. His reason for moving this amendment, *Mr. Sheridan* said, was, in order to bring forward a proposition, which, from the late events that had taken place on the continent, he conceived

to

to be of considerable importance to the country; he therefore moved that the House do adjourn till Thursday the 10th

Mr. Jekyll seconded this motion, and expressed his astonishment at the absence of all the King's ministers. He thought it reasonable to expect to find them in their places to explain some late events which were extremely curious and singular in their nature. He wished those Gentlemen had been present to give an account to the House of the money that had been sent to the King of Prussia, and of the reason which prevented that Potentate from fulfilling his engagements. There was also another circumstance which he could not help mentioning: It had been formerly stated by his Hon. Friend in that House, that Lord Dorchester had written a letter to the Indians of Lower Canada, respecting this country being about to be involved in a war with the American States. The authenticity of that letter was flatly denied in that House; and when the same subject was brought forward by a Noble Friend of his in another place, the letter was treated as a gross forgery; but now it had turned out, from the letters of Mr. Hammond, our diplomatic agent with the United States, that what his Hon. Friend had said with regard to that letter was correctly true; for it perhaps had laid the foundation of a war with America.

Mr. Long said, he could give no answer on the subject of proroguing Parliament; but he was under the necessity of agreeing to the amendment, because the Hon. Gentleman who moved it had an opportunity of counting out the House. [The Speaker had been put into the chair by the Black Rod's summons to attend the Royal Assent being given by commission to Bills in the House of Peers; about twenty Members only were present.]

Mr. Grey could not possibly account for the absence of all his Majesty's ministers on that occasion, but by supposing it to be a part of that system which had uniformly governed their conduct from the commencement of their administration. The ministers of the Crown had constantly and uniformly considered the House of Commons as subordinate to themselves; and if they would not attend their places voluntarily, that House had a right to demand their attendance. There were many points, respecting which the House of Commons was bound to enquire before the close of the session: Among others, they had a right to ask them the reason of the non-performance of the treaty with the King of Prussia. It was now more than two months since the Prussians were to have been in the field, and they had not yet begun to march, though the subsidy we had paid for their assistance was enor-

mous beyond all precedent in the history of the country. He thought the King's ministers would have been better employed in attending their duty in Parliament, than in settling new arrangements in the cabinet.

Mr. Sheridan said, it would have been more decent for the Hon. Gentleman who moved to adjourn till Friday, to give any reason for agreeing to the amendment, rather than confess that attention to the interests of their constituents in the House of Commons, was only a secondary object in their contemplation. He must persist in the amendment; and give notice to the few Members present, that on Thursday next he should make a motion on the state of the country with respect to the war.

The amendment was put and carried, and the House adjourned till Thursday.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, July 10.

A new writ was moved for the election of a Member for the borough of Honiton, in the room of *Sir George Yonge*, Bart. who has accepted of the office of Master and Worker of his Majesty's Mint; a writ for New Malton, in the room of the *Right Hon. Edmund Burke*, who had accepted the office of Steward of the Chiltern Hundreds, and another for Bishop's Castle.

MONEY PAID ON ACCOUNT OF SUBSIDY TO THE KING OF PRUSSIA, AND HIS CONDUCT IN CONSEQUENCE.

Mr. Sheridan said, he rejoiced that the attendance of Members had put the Speaker in the chair; it had enabled him to deliver a few parting words. He rejoiced that ministers had at length condescended to think that the House of Commons merited some attention, and to suppose that it might be possible that some Gentlemen might feel an inclination to make a few observations on the present situation of affairs previously to the prorogation of Parliament. He rejoiced also at the attendance of the Members that day, because it had afforded a Gentleman opposite him an opportunity to make a motion, which would enable the Public to avail themselves of the abilities of a Right Hon. Gentleman (*Mr. Windham*) and of another Right Hon. Gentleman (*Mr. Burke*), whose secession was the object of the other motion. That Right Hon. Gentleman had served the Public many years; and though he had recently differed from him in material points, yet he should have been happy to have heard that he had vacated his seat for the purpose of taking possession of an office equally profitable with that of

Mr.

Mr. Windham. Another reason of his rejoicing was, that the attendance of Members would enable the Right Hon. Gentleman opposite to him to make a motion, which he had heard was to be made, for the erection of a monument to the memory of Captain Harvey and Captain Hutt; as a testimony of public gratitude to the memory of those two gallant officers, who died in consequence of the wounds they had received in the late engagement, which terminated so gloriously for their country.

The proposition which it was his intention to submit to the consideration of the House, Mr. Sheridan said, did not go in the first instance to do that which he thought to be the most proper in the present situation of affairs, to advise his Majesty not to prorogue the Parliament, although in one event it might be followed up by such a motion; for nothing, in his opinion, was more necessary at that moment, than that the House, his Majesty's national, constitutional, and best advisers, should continue sitting to deliberate on important public affairs at this awful hour. He should first, however, make some observations for the purpose of obtaining information; and the effect of those observations would determine whether he should not move an address to his Majesty to continue the sitting of Parliament. If they were at an earlier period of the session, and if the events which had lately taken place had taken place in February, or March, or April, he believed there was no man who would not have thought that a motion for enquiring into the causes of those events was absolutely necessary. Six weeks only had elapsed since the object of the war was explicitly announced. Scarcely more than that period had passed away since an Hon. Gentleman had avowed that the war had for its object the extermination of the government at Paris; and it was added, by way of shewing the sincerity of that avowal, that we ought to employ the last man, and the last guinea, for the purpose of destroying the French republic. In the same short period of six weeks, did he say too much, when he asserted, that events had happened which had proved that the object of the war was wholly impracticable and chimerical? Did he say too much, when he affirmed that he had a right to ask, Whether the object of the war was still the same? Had ministers ever held out a hope in which they had not failed? Had they ever held out one expectation which was not followed almost with immediate disappointment? Not one! They who acted with him differed with ministers on the principles and object of the war, but they did not deny them a man or a guinea. Application was made for powers more extensive than had ever been granted before, and they were given.

Ministers

Ministers told the House, and they told the Public, they had the most sanguine expectations of success, if proper resources were granted to them. They were not deserted by the House. They had been furnished with the most ample resources. They applied for a subsidy to the King of Prussia, to an unprecedented, to an enormous amount. They had it. They applied for a long subsidy to the King of Sardinia. It was voted. They applied for unlimited powers with regard to employing French emigrants in the King's service. The powers were given them. What had been the consequence of all this? Disgrace, defeat, disaster, beyond what were ever experienced in any former war. Since then all these hopes and expectations had been disappointed, should they not enquire the cause? Were the imbecility and incapacity of the ministers to exempt them from animadversions? Were they to practise delusions and deceit, and were they still to be silent? Mr. Sheridan said, he should like to hear what excuse they could offer? He should be glad to know what they had to say on the favourite plan of marching to Paris? On what ground they maintained the practicability of that decisive stroke? Would they say that they had been disappointed by the King of Prussia? If they did, it would not be asking too much, to enquire whether that Monarch had received his subsidy, and what troops he had furnished in consequence of it. On that subject he should indeed think it scandalous if the House were to separate without requiring or receiving some information. He would not suppose that the minister would assert that the King of Prussia was assisting the alliance against France by besieging Cracow, and by massacring the Poles. If the minister was to say he did not imagine that the King of Prussia would have acted as he had done, he should answer, it was his business to have so imagined, for he was warned of it in the course of the debates on the granting the subsidy, and he might have been taught to expect it from experience of the conduct of that Monarch. He was warned also of what might be the conduct of the Emperor and all the allies in this war; what had been predicted on these points had actually happened, and that so clearly and plainly, that to say they were events which might not have been expected, was a subterfuge unworthy of a British minister, unworthy of any man who had any value of his character for judgment or integrity. If it were represented to them that the numbers of the French were so great, he should answer in reply, that the minister must have been aware of the French system of rising in a mass, and that he knew they would on any emergency arise, as he had himself said, "an armed nation." He should be glad to know why, when these

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these adverse events occurred in Flanders, the troops were suffered to hover on the coast of Hampshire, and were not employed in strengthening our force in Flanders? Upon military tactics, Mr. Sheridan said, he did not mean to enter, because he did not profess to understand them, but the general principle, that the object of the war had totally failed, was known to every person. It was known to every person, that the avowed end of the war was unattainable; that the allies had been driven out of Flanders, and that they had been forced to act on the defensive on the frontiers of Holland. In that view of our affairs, he could not think it unreasonable for that House to call on ministers, to say explicitly whether Government still persevered in their declared object of the war? And in asking that question, he observed, he should have much more satisfaction, if the Right Hon. Gentleman who was at that time reposing in the cool shades of the Chiltern Hundreds were present; but on account of the Public, he must demand and was sure he was entitled to an answer. On the sentiments which had been expressed by that Right Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Windham) who was at that time qualifying himself for war minister, he should say little; if he were present, he should say much. It was, however, on account of some new political alliances which had been formed, that the cause of the war should be explicitly declared. Though he should imagine, that as the times were so different, it would be absurd to proceed on the same individual principles; yet, as he suspected that as the members of this new alliance in office were placed in important situations, a deeper and more stubborn principle for prosecuting the war had been adopted, and that these new appointments hoisted the bloody flag, to declare that war was to be carried on till either the government of France was exterminated, or till England fell in the attempt. When he considered those insuperable bars which once prevented any communication with the minister; when he recollected the solemn declaration in 1784, that a temporary dereliction of one office, on the part of the minister, was a sacrifice absolutely necessary to the insulted dignity of the House of Commons; when he remembered that those declarations, though long made, were long adhered to, and even repeated in the last session of Parliament; when he considered these circumstances, and reflected a little on the unpopularity of former coalitions; when he reflected on the disinterestedness of the characters in question, he must think that nothing but a paramount and imperious necessity had induced them to adopt their present mode of conduct. Had they acted in consequence of any admiration of the great talents of the minister, and had that admiration

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swept away all their former opposition? Were they to believe, on the other side, that the union was founded on the confessed imbecility of ministers, who were to throw the management of the war into other hands? He could not suppose that this was the case; because, however rational and well founded their opinion of the imbecility and incapacity of the ministers might be, yet he knew that the minister possessed too good an opinion of his own abilities, either to acknowledge his own incapacity, or to give up the management of the war, from a conviction of his own inability. The present mode of conduct therefore of those Gentlemen, could only arise from an idea of the dangerous situation of the country, from a knowledge of the failure of every project adopted by the minister, from a conviction that all petty considerations should give way, and that the case was so urgent, as to render the honour of the House of Commons a circumstance of no importance. Such must be the cause of their forgetfulness of all their former declarations, of all their former pledges. If therefore he was right in the motives which he had supposed must have influenced their conduct, they ought at least to give the House of Commons credit for being willing to remain on their posts in a period of such extreme difficulty and danger. For these reasons, he was entitled to call for an explicit declaration of the object of the war, as the House had a right to know, whether the cause of the war remained the same or not. He believed that, unless the wild project to which he had alluded was given up, no person would support the war with vigour, and he particularly felt it to be his duty to press an inquiry as to the situation of this country and the King of Prussia. A large sum of money had been voted to that Prince; and it did not appear that he had done any thing towards performing his part of the engagement; on that account alone the House was entitled to an explanation; and the Public, through their medium, expected to be satisfied in that respect.

Explanation, Mr. Sheridan said, was also necessary on the subject of our difference with America. It was a known and incontrovertible fact, that the present Administration was detested in every part of America. As, however, the minister and his colleagues had, on a former occasion, evinced such an ignorance of American affairs, it was not too much to suppose that they were also ignorant of that fact. America, it was true, was divided into two parties: The one violent and rash, favourers of the principles of the French in their most blameable excess; the other wise and moderate, and willing to sacrifice a great deal for the sake of preserving the blessings of peace. But whatever difference of opinion there

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might be between these two parties on political subjects, in this they were all agreed, that the conduct of the administration of Great Britain, for the last ten years, had been devoid of every principle of justice, and even of common sense. In this point of view, he had a right to assert, that they might be ignorant of this fact; and let it be remembered, that when he read a paper some time ago, relative to Lord Dorchester's speech to the Indians of Lower Canada, the authenticity of it was generally denied, and it was deemed a forgery by the Secretary of State, though ministers might have supposed that Lord Dorchester might be guilty of as gross folly as themselves. In another place, to which he could not, consistently with Parliamentary order, allude, the speech was treated in such a manner, that the Noble Lord who read it, was almost accused of reading it only for the purpose of sowing dissension between the two countries. He wished therefore to know what authority was given to Lord Dorchester for making such a speech, and whether any steps had been taken by Government in consequence of it. If in answer, he was told, that the negotiation with Mr. Jay (the American minister) was in such a train that it would be dangerous to reveal any secrets, he should certainly press the subject no further. But he felt it his duty to mention it, that ministers might avail themselves, if they thought fit, of an opportunity of satisfying the Public upon that very important subject. Perhaps, indeed, the Americans relied on the character of the administration of this country, and having witnessed the petty miserable expedients of annual Commercial Bills they had adopted, thought they would retract any thing they had advanced, and for that purpose had given Mr. Jay full power and distinct directions to negotiate; but as nothing that could be done by Administration could possibly satisfy the Americans without the express recognition of Parliament, he thought that of itself a very good reason why Parliament should not at this time be prorogued. Upon this head he should only submit to the minister the propriety of his giving some satisfaction to the Public. If the minister should be inclined to give the House any information with respect to America—if he was inclined to give any explanation with regard to the money paid in part of the Prussian subsidy, and the subsequent conduct of the King of Prussia—if he was willing to give the House, in short, any explanation, with regard to the present war, as to the true object of Government in carrying it on, or to afford the Public any light on our present situation, then, Mr. Sheridan said, he should follow up his first motion with another, to address his Majesty not to prorogue Parliament

until an opportunity should be had of receiving such information; but if, on the contrary, no such information was to be given, the subsequent motions would be useless, and therefore he should not attempt to make them.

It was necessary also to recur to the situation and sentiments of our allies. They were told that they could not make peace; not because they dislike a republican form of government, but because they must have security for the future, and the French had not a government to be depended on. Of all the insulting mockeries that ever tired the patience of men, this was the most insulting. We saw that we were the dupes of all Europe, and that none of our allies were to be depended upon; and yet we insisted upon having from the French government security for the future. What had the meanest of our allies, the King of Sardinia, done? Nothing, but receive his money. What had Spain done? Had she co-operated with us in the Mediterranean? Had she kept twenty sail of the line in Cadiz harbour, as she was bound to keep? Did she send out any force to intercept that great American fleet, of whose sailing she received such timely notice? No. Was then the Spanish government to be depended upon? What had the Dutch done, who have been styled a maritime power, and had not furnished one ship? Was the Empress of Russia to be depended upon? Had she furnished a man or a rouble? Had Austria brought half the number of men which she promised? Was the King of Prussia to be depended upon? Had he not only deluded, but defrauded us? When we looked to the state of our own nation, was the British Government to be depended upon? What promise had ministers fulfilled? What was our conduct at Toulon? And how had we kept our promises to the royalists? In short, what he would ask was, what had been done by any of our allies, separately taken, or all of them jointly, that was to be depended on, and how long were the people of this country to be the dupes of all the other powers of Europe in this mad crusade? Could there be any argument, then, more preposterous and absurd, than that we ought not to make peace, without having security for the future?

The only power in Europe, which had been faithful to its promises was France; she had proved that she was to be depended upon; and yet we treated her as if she had no subordination, and as if her inhabitants were only an undisciplined rabble and mere banditti. She had not fulfilled her promises to her allies, because she had no allies; but she had been terribly punctual in her threats. She said that she would single-handed fight all the despots of Europe, and she kept her word. She

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She declared that she would drive us from Toulon, and she kept her word. She affirmed that she would chase the Prussians to the other side of the Rhine, and she kept her word. She asserted, that she would beat the allies out of Flanders, and she kept her word. Why therefore was France to be called the only power in Europe on whose promise no reliance can be placed? Only because she was the only power in Europe that had been faithful to its promise! The minister thought himself strengthened by this grand alliance of political characters at home. He thought, on the contrary, that the sentiments of the persons who composed that alliance would be fatal to the country. He hoped that those Gentlemen having attached to themselves a degree of responsibility, would re-consider their declarations. He trusted that, when they knew that their opinions might turn the fate of the war, they would revise those opinions. They would, he hoped, recollect the wisdom of his Right Hon. Friend (Mr. Fox), whose absence he regretted, and take the first opportunity of making peace with the reprobated republic of France. He was yet sanguine enough to entertain such a hope. If however, deriding all demonstration and experience, this ruinous and mad crusade was really to be persevered in; if this insatuated administration had gained nothing by their new alliance, but an additional infusion of rashness and obstinacy; he was confident the hour was not far off, when the duped and deluded people of this country would lose at once their credulity and their patience; when a solemn hour of account would come; an hour which their having seduced others to share the peril of, would neither ward off nor protract; when the eyes, the hopes, the hearts of the nation would be turned to one man—to his Right Hon. Friend; a man in whose mind, however its generous nature might be wounded by a separation from long-formed and dearly-cherished connexions, he was confident, there would ever be found a paramount attachment to the safety, the prosperity, the independence of his country, and to the liberty and happiness of man in general; a man who, at that very moment, did not to the public eye appear *less* for being more *alone*; on the contrary, who seemed to stand on higher ground from being *less* surrounded. To him, in the stormy hour, the nation would, he knew, turn at last; and they would find him,

“ Like a great sea-mark, standing ev’ry flaw,
 “ And saving those that eye him.”

Mr. Sheridan observed, that in all points in which he could view our present situation, he saw abundant reason for Par-

liament entering into an examination of it, and coming to some determination for the satisfaction of the Public. He concluded with moving, "That there be laid before the House an account of the money issued for the King of Prussia, in pursuance of the treaty between his Majesty and the King of Prussia, in consequence of a treaty signed at the Hague, in April last, together with an account of the troops employed by him in concert with his Majesty's troops, in pursuance of that treaty."

Mr. Grey seconded the motion.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, that, before he entered into the three great points which the Hon. Gentleman had made the chief topics of discussion, he would apply himself to those inferior matters which had been urged as preliminary to them. The Hon. Gentleman seemed to express some satisfaction that he had at last had an opportunity of saying a few parting words, and of stating some observations; and at the same time insinuated something blameable in his Majesty's ministers, on account of their supposed inattention to the House, and to their public duty; as they were not found in the House, at its last meeting, discharging that part of their public duty. He begged only to remind the House, that it was very generally understood, that all public business was closed. It was undoubtedly true the House was not prorogued; it was only adjourned, on account of some necessary arrangements made for the better conducting the affairs of the Executive Government, and in fact, for reasons in themselves pretty obvious, and which had been pretty well mixed up with the discussions they had just heard from the Hon. Gentleman. Unless, therefore, they themselves had felt, from the situation of affairs, that some new measure was necessary to be adopted, which they did not, as they thought that, in their view of the subject, it would rather tend to embarrass than to improve the country, they could not very well conceive that any other person had any thing to propose. They did not imagine, till they heard of the Hon. Gentleman's notice, that it was very likely that he wanted to discuss again any of those subjects to which he had just directed their attention. He thought this was enough to say for himself. As to some Gentlemen who were absent, as their seats were vacant, and their situations, as servants of the Crown, had not yet commenced, they had sufficient excuse at present. His Hon. Friend (*Mr. Dundas*); they all knew, was absent by reason of a severe domestic misfortune, which he was sure the Hon. Gentleman regretted equally with him.

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Having thus explained the reason of the absence of ministers on a former day, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, he should very shortly advert to the three distinct points to which the Hon. Gentleman had alluded; and he should do it the more concisely; because, with regard to two of them, he thought it would be obvious to every Gentleman in that House, that it was impossible for him, without the greatest indiscretion, and an entire forgetfulness of every part of his duty, to enter into any discussion.

With regard to one of these points, he had no difficulty in giving a very distinct answer.

The three points were, the object of the war, as directed against France; the conduct of the King of Prussia; and the negotiation now pending between this country and the United States of America.

Respecting the two last, he should state the reasons why he should pass them over in profound silence.

With regard to the first, the object of the present war, it was not necessary to say much; but what he had to say, he wished to state as distinctly as he could; and in order to do so, he must beg not to answer the question as the Hon. Gentleman had put it. He begged not to answer it equivocally, not upon any vague grounds, not upon construction, not upon misrepresentation. He begged to answer the question, What the object of the war was? not from what the Hon. Member had mistakenly represented it to be, but from what he himself had constantly represented it to have been.

A number of irrelative and desultory observations had been made by the Hon. Gentleman, who had made up his argument by quoting some parts from one Gentleman's speech, and some from another; and also borrowing something from those who were not delivering their own opinion, but were criticising the opinion of others, and putting their own construction upon it. Among other loose assertions, the Hon. Gentleman had said, the object of the war was the extermination of the government subsisting in France, without explaining whether he applied it personally to those who formed the government of France, or whether it extended to all those who were adherents to that government: Using it equivocally, and to countenance another construction, he said it was a war *usque ad internecionem*; a phrase which, as far as he recollected, had never been used but by those who opposed the war. If the Hon. Gentleman meant that the object of the war, as expressed by ministers, was the destruction of the Jacobin government in France, he, for his part, would readily admit, that it had been distinctly avowed; that it was still distinctly avowed,

avowed, and could not be receded from; and he would add, that whatever strength ministers might gain from the counsel, as well as from the known respectability and influence of their new associates, their resolutions on this head could acquire no additional force from that circumstance; nor could their determination to pursue that object be more distinctly and firmly adhered to, than they would of themselves follow it up to the last letter as it had been avowed by him. The object was neither to be heightened by new grounds of success, nor relinquished from any temporary failures, in the means of its attainment; and was one which he would never depart from, as absolutely necessary to the security and preservation of this country and her allies. It was not a war of extermination, as the Hon. Gentleman had called it, nor was its object the conquest of France, but the emancipation of that unhappy country; not the destruction of an enemy, but the overthrow of an usurpation hostile to this and every other government in Europe; and destructive, even to the last extremity of ruin, to France itself. It was impossible to forget that this was the object of the war, as distinctly avowed in his Majesty's speech, and recognized by the House in a variety of proceedings, taken after solemn debate and deliberate consideration; no man of common candour could, therefore, misrepresent it. Let the Right Hon. Member suppose that all France was united in support of the present system, yet he would be forced to declare his detestation of it; nor could any argument lead him to believe, that a numerous and enlightened people willingly submitted to the most severe and sanguinary despotism that ever stained the page of history. It was impossible to put an end to this most furious tyranny without destroying the present government of France.

The manner in which the Hon. Gentleman had mentioned this country and her allies by the appellation of *despots*, the Chancellor of the Exchequer remarked, was a mode of speech so exactly copied from the French, that he was even surprised that the Hon. Gentleman used it, who, though sometimes their apologist, had often been obliged to reprobate their actions. Who were those that the Hon. Gentleman joined with the French in calling despots? The regular powers of Europe, Great Britain and her allies, united in one common cause, using the most vigorous endeavours to open to France the means to work its own safety, and for restoring order and prosperity to that distracted country. "Let the Hon. Gentleman understand once more (said he) that that object is not varied, nor that resolution altered; that there is not a man in his Majesty's councils who has not a firm and unalterable determination

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termination to employ every exertion, to use the best means and faculties of the country, in conjunction with his Majesty's allies, to effect that which can alone render peace valuable; I mean (said the Chancellor of the Exchequer) to render it permanent and secure. Let him recollect his own declarations, and the discussion the last day we conversed on this subject. That very object had been avowed in his Majesty's declaration in the course of last summer, in his speech as it appeared in the close of last session, and in his Majesty's speech in the beginning of the present session, and it had been adopted by the House: And, therefore, the answer the Hon. Gentleman received from me was, that the object is such as has been avowed. I cannot state it more distinctly than formerly. The object of the war has been precisely the same from the beginning."

If, after having been in that House parties to the solemn pledge given to their Sovereign to support him in it, a few weeks bad success, the loss of some towns in Flanders, the possession of which had in all wars been the fluctuating and unstable consequence of every temporary advantage, and the short series of those vicissitudes inseparable from warfare, should so unnerve them, and so extinguish every spark of British spirit in their bosoms, as to induce them to abandon all their objects, he should consider himself, and those who honoured him with their support, as fairly chargeable with the most shameful weakness and timidity, and with the meanest dereliction of their duty. An essential point deserving the consideration of the House was, the very different situation in which we stood compared with that of the enemy, and, notwithstanding all their new triumphs, how much more we had gained from them than they had obtained from us.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer dwelt upon this part of his subject with great earnestness and powers of reasoning, and asked, whether, considering the circumstances that he had alluded to, the House was to be brought to sacrifice their own best interests, their very existence, and the well-being, order, and good government of all Europe, to the phantoms that might be attempted to be raised by the interested, or the panics it might suit their purposes to create? Humble though his opinion of himself was, he thought better of his own fortitude, and certainly had a much better opinion of that of the House, than to give way, even for a moment, to such a conception; and he sincerely thanked the Hon. Gentleman for having given him that day an opportunity of declaring, that if the disappointments which the allied armies had experienced, and the difficulties they had encountered, in the prosecution of the just and

and honourable war in which they were embarked, had been greater in a tenfold degree than they appeared to be, even from the mist of exaggerated misrepresentation which the Hon. Gentleman had cast upon it, it could not, in his mind, make an atom of variation, as to the only methods that prudence required them to take for the protection of this realm, and the conservation of that general system of order and tranquillity, which had been long gradually methodizing and moulding the mind of man into a more exalted and happy state of social union.

With regard to the question, the Hon. Gentleman had emphatically asked, "What promise had ministers fulfilled?" He said, he should answer it by another, "What promise had they broken?" For what promise, indeed, could they break, who had never made any in the way the Hon. Gentleman would insinuate? The only way it was possible for them to break their promise, was to follow the advice of the Hon. Gentleman, and relinquish the object of the war, to abandon every engagement with their allies, to forget every debt they owed to society, every trust reposed in them by their Sovereign and Parliament, and every thing they owed to honour, honesty, or their own reputation. Being on that part of the Hon. Gentleman's charge, he thought it necessary to remind the House, that he had never, from the beginning of the war, spoken of any expected event with certainty; it was impossible he could, the circumstances of all wars were so variable and sudden, that no prudent man would hazard himself by risking a decisive opinion beforehand: He had always spoken of the events of the war with extreme and obvious anxiety, accompanied nevertheless with all that hope which the state of Great Britain, the relative state of France, and the situation of Europe, well justified: And as he held no language then, either sanguine or over-weening, so he would now say, that the hope which he then entertained was not in the smallest degree diminished. He was yet of opinion, that the Powers of Europe had within them strength sufficient to secure their own safety; and he had not so very mean an estimation of their intellects as to suppose, that they would not, to the utmost, exert that power for the protection of every thing that could be held most dear by every friend to civilized society.

On the other two points, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, he would not long detain the House.

With regard to the treaty with the King of Prussia, he had only to say, that his Majesty's servants were responsible that nothing should be wanting on their part, for the true and faithful performance of the engagements they had advised his Majesty

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Majesty to enter into. Whether those troops engaged by the subsidiary treaty had been most properly employed in the places where they were actually employed, or whether they might have been employed in another place more beneficially for the common cause, were questions which he would venture to assert there was not a man in that House, who wished well to the operations of the combined armies, and the success of the cause, would wish to have answered in the midst of a campaign. On that subject, considering all the circumstances of the war, it would be highly improper to insist on a reply, as it could only provoke a discussion which must be mischievous to all the objects we had at stake; on that ground, therefore, he should give it his decided negative.

With respect to the other object, while negotiation was pending with America, he held it to be equally unnecessary and improper to state any circumstance relative to it, at a moment when a person had arrived in this country, entrusted with powers on the part of America, in order to see whether, by friendly discussion, our differences with that country could be adjusted. The public discussion of that subject at the present moment was most likely to defeat the order and arrangement of the business to the future satisfaction of both countries, and at the same time consistent with the interest of his Majesty's subjects. He should, therefore, say nothing on that subject. He did not know whether the Hon. Gentleman would, or would not, wave the moving of it. If he did, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, he should undoubtedly think it his duty to give his negative to the motion, on the grounds he had already stated. As to the general grounds of persevering in the war, notwithstanding the assertions of the Hon. Gentleman, he did not suspect the sentiments of the House, or of the nation, were changed. If they were not, the question was, What they were to gain by adjourning instead of proroguing Parliament? With regard to the campaign, ministers were to carry it on in the manner which might seem most advisable to them, and were responsible to Parliament for their conduct in that respect. It did not, therefore, require the sitting of Parliament to watch that conduct; neither was it necessary that it should be kept sitting on account of the Prussian subsidy, in order to observe whether the King of Prussia fulfilled the terms of the treaty; and it was least of all necessary that they should continue sitting on account of the affairs with America, since, under the present circumstances, any Parliamentary interference on that subject would be highly injudicious and improper. On these several accounts he felt that an Address to his Majesty, such as had

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been moved, would be highly inexpedient and unadvisable, and therefore he should give the motion a decided negative.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer took notice of what the Hon. Gentleman had said about the unpopularity of his Majesty's ministers in America. The Hon. Gentleman had told them, that there was a Jacobin party in America, acting on French principles, and promoting French interests. With that Jacobin party, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, he hoped the King's ministers were as unpopular as the Hon. Member himself was with those who opposed Jacobin principles in this country. That the persons professing these Jacobin principles were part of the Hon. Gentleman's ordinary correspondents he could not have supposed, unless the Hon. Gentleman himself had so stated it. The Hon. Gentleman, however, was not very nice in his choice of correspondents in the western hemisphere, as he had lately shewn. Whether the King's ministers were popular or not in America among the Jacobins of that country, signified but little. With Jacobins he always expected to be unpopular, both at home and abroad. It was enough for him to know, that the popularity of Administration in this country would depend on their stopping the progress of Jacobin principles, on opposing them wherever they occurred, and in whatever shape they might be found. To promote impressions unfavourable to the success of the war, and to retrieve, if possible, a small degree of that popularity which had been lost among the Hon. Member's Jacobin friends in America, was pretty clearly the great cause of his motion.

The Hon. Gentleman had asserted, that the present Administration had been vested with greater powers than had been given to any former ministers. What men or money, said the Hon. Gentleman, had the King's ministers asked, and not received? He made no scruple to admit the fact; the House had been most liberal certainly in their grants to his Majesty's ministers; that Hon. Gentleman, however, had constantly opposed them, as he did every other measure of Government. He believed even the ordinary mode of recruiting the army had been made the object rather of severe criticism. In short, there was not one measure of Government which had not been favoured with all the heat and eloquence of that Hon. Gentleman's vehement opposition.

After the first campaign, ministers had done what they thought the most likely to call forth the zeal and energy of the people, in the cause in which we had embarked, by proposing the raising voluntary corps by public subscription; this had been opposed upon the ground, that it would be destruc-
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tive to the constitution; the House judged otherwise, and approved the plan; the constitution had survived, and was strengthened by it; the success with which it had been crowned did honour to the zeal, the loyalty, and the gallantry of the nation.

The next measure of importance adopted arose from the consideration that Great Britain, rich in pecuniary resources, should endeavour to draw forth foreign aid, and facilitate the exertions of other powers, according to the ancient system of the country in continental wars. We should, by means of a subsidy, endeavour to increase the efforts made by nations whose military strength exceeded their pecuniary ability. We did so in the case of the Prussian subsidy; but it was reprobated with the same warmth, with the same eloquence, with the same zeal, as the measure adopted to increase the internal defence of the country. After retaining, as far as we could, all the subjects of Great Britain, and those foreign troops, it was natural to think of calling forth, of disciplining, and of rendering regular and effectual, that part of the French nation who had taken refuge in England, and whom we might enable to bear arms, for the purpose of assisting in recovering all those rights that were most dear to them. The demands of ministers on that head, according to the Hon. Gentleman, had not been refused. They certainly had not, except by the Hon. Gentleman. Ministers had united all the exertions of Europe to those of the sound part of France, in order to effect the salvation of that country, and to destroy that tyranny which otherwise threatened to overwhelm all civilized society.

None of these measures however, nor the object of the war, was what had so much irritated the Hon. Gentleman, as a matter to which he had so pointedly alluded, a topic drawn, not from events on the continent, but from events nearer home, and which had obviously made a deep impression on the Hon. Gentleman's mind. The Hon. Gentleman asked, What there could be but a great and pressing necessity to produce the new arrangements in the present Administration? That question he would answer with another, What greater necessity could there exist to faithful subjects of their Sovereign, to faithful guardians of the constitution, and sincere lovers of their country, to unite their efforts to preserve the security of the Crown, the authority of the Parliament, the liberty, the tranquillity, and safety of the nation, than the necessity of the moment? What connexion of persons were more likely to serve the King well, or to defend the constitution wisely and faithfully, than those who had united on the ground of that necessity? What was their object? They were not contend-
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ing whether this or that description of family were the most likely to compose an administration that would meet the public opinion and forward the King's service; they were not contending with regard to constitutional points, whether this or that legislative measure, whether this or that representation of the people, was or was not to be adopted; they were not then debating what was the best form of government for India; nor discussing what were the merits of a peace made twelve years ago; but they were considering, during the existence of an alarming, disastrous, and unprovoked war, what was the best mode of defending the liberty, the property, and security of every Englishman, by preserving the constitution from the dangers and destruction with which it was threatened. And as they tendered their allegiance, as they tendered their safety, as they cherished the memory of their ancestors, who had defended that constitution, or looked to the interests of their posterity, they were bound to lay aside every distinction, to remove every obstacle, and to unite the talents, the characters, integrity, and honour, of all honest men who were able to serve their country, upon which depended the present and future safety not only of Great Britain, but of Europe. On these principles they were united; on these principles they would act; and if their exertions should unfortunately fail, and not be crowned with success, they would at least have the consolation of being conscious that every effort had been made that human wisdom could suggest; and that nothing had been wanting on their part towards the attainment of an object to which there was no one among them that would not have devoted all his faculties, and, if necessary, his life. These were the feelings and sentiments, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, which he entertained on this subject; and he was extremely obliged to the Hon. Member for the opportunity he had given him of stating his sentiments explicitly.

Mr. Grey said, he had attended to the Right Hon. Gentleman with the most fixed attention, and he had not been disappointed. The Right Hon. Gentleman had given to the questions put by his Hon. Friend, exactly that sort of answer which he expected to hear from him; he had treated the present distressing situation of our arms merely as a temporary accident, which was the effect of the chance of war, and which the chance of war might as soon repair. He desired the Right Hon. Gentleman, however, seriously to consider what our condition at present was. Our situation was dreadful; in the second year of the most ruinous war in which this country had ever been engaged, after an expence of above twenty

twenty millions, and an useless waste of blood, we were precisely just where we were, having lost, in the present campaign, the Netherlands, which it had been our boast so much to have recovered during the last; and yet these were the events which the Right Hon. Gentleman chose to dignify with the epithet of accidental. He was perfectly ready to admit, that the object of the war had been well stated by the Right Hon. Gentleman; nor had he any fault to find with it. Indeed, upon the slightest inspection, it would be found, there scarcely existed any difference between this object, as avowed on the one side by ministers, and charged against them by his Hon. Friend. Was it not as he (Mr. Sheridan) said, to exterminate the Jacobin Government of France? The Right Hon. Gentleman said, No! His Hon. Friend had rather been severely treated, because he had stated that *extermination* was the object of ministers; but it had been undeservedly, for it was evident, however they differed in terms, in essence that was the object meant. The minister said, it was not the extermination, but the destruction, of the present government of France that was their object. He professed he was totally at a loss to discover where lay the real and essential difference between the two ideas conveyed by those words. On the commencement of hostilities a description had been given to the war, which Ministers accused Opposition of having introduced—it had been termed *Bellum usque ad internecionem*. It was true those words had been used by way of reproach at that period, by an Hon. Gentleman who displayed his abilities in exposing the conduct of Administration, but who had since thought proper to join in their measures, and was to be the war minister. This term, Mr. Grey said, he looked on as most ominous; for he dreaded that the principles, as well as the expression, would be transferred with that Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Windham) into the councils of the country, and that hereafter such would be the objects vainly attempted to be pursued.

The Right Hon. Gentleman affected to say, their object was not to destroy, but to restore; he would ask then, How was that object proposed to be achieved? Was it by assisting the French against each other? Would not two campaigns, wasted in fruitless, ineffectual, and disgraceful efforts, convince us of the fallacy of such an attempt? The Hon. Gentleman had built much upon the assistance we were to receive from the well-disposed inhabitants of France: How had that turned out in point of fact? Were the people of Toulon to be taken as an example? Did they flock to our standard when we offered them a Government which was supposed to be
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most congenial to their wishes? Or were the inhabitants of the northern frontier to be adduced as instances of what might be expected from the co-operation of the loyal French with our armies? In the most favourable and successful period of our arms we found no such inclination on their parts. Where then did the Right Hon. Gentleman discover any of those inclinations, which he repeatedly assured the House dwelt in the hearts of thousands, and would immediately discover themselves when the opportunity should present for so doing? Nothing appeared to justify the supposition; yet, nevertheless, it was still declared in that House, by the Right Hon. Gentleman, that were affairs ten times more disastrous than at this moment they were, he would persevere. If, in the course of last year's campaign, we were unable to make any impression upon them, under all the disadvantages on their part of a rebellion raging in their country, what was to be hoped for at present, when their government had become energetic, their resources regular, and their armies were increased in number and accommodation? Some of those ministerial newspapers, which were incessantly labouring to mislead and delude the public mind, had lately made use of this curious argument, to reconcile us to our present misfortunes, that now that all danger from without was likely to cease, in consequence of the combined armies of the allies falling back, the French would set about cutting their own throats, and their government must of course crumble to pieces by internal divisions. Happy prospect this, where defeat was victory, and where the only hope of advantage must be derived from a continuance of loss and disappointment! How much longer were we to persist in such absurdity! What greater and more disastrous losses were we to endure, before we could be induced to relinquish an object so unattainable! What waste of blood and treasure was this miserable country fated to continue to deplore, ere we should be induced to acknowledge that Republic, which, he openly and boldly avowed it his opinion to be, we should sooner or later be obliged to recognize.

The Right Hon. Gentleman, Mr. Grey observed, looked as though he was surprised at this assertion; he would therefore again say, that he believed, and experience justified the conclusion, that we should be compelled to negotiate with that Jacobin Government we at present persisted in attempts to destroy. He reminded the House, that the present were not the only or first ministry who had held the same lofty language, and had been obliged to recant it. In the American war, the Administration of that day had equally affected to despise and deny the newly-erected government; and such, he

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he doubted not, would be the event of the present unhappy contest, in the end of which they would be obliged to treat with those very persons they had so much undervalued. In the case of America, that same Congress which had been held out as traitors and rebels, were at last admitted to be, what they termed themselves, the legal representatives of a free people. In the present instance, he and his friends had repeatedly endeavoured to persuade the House, though ineffectually, to adopt the same mode of negotiation.

It would, perhaps, be asked, Shall we treat in the present moment? The Right Hon. Gentleman had affirmed it would be pusillanimity to sue for peace. He meant no such thing as suing to the French, or any other people in the world. He wished for peace, but wished for it upon no other terms than such as were consistent with the honour and dignity, equally with the interests of the nation. He had, therefore, no hesitation to repeat his proposition, and once more earnestly exhort the House, to do that in the present instance which they would be bound to do in the end—acknowledge the Republic upon terms reciprocal, fair and honourable to both countries. Such a proposition he had made at the breaking out of hostilities, had repeated it during their progress, and now most seriously and earnestly pressed it again for their consideration and acceptance. The Right Hon. Gentleman avowed himself to be of an opinion diametrically opposite. However sorry he might be for this in other respects, in one sense he was pleased at his explicit and declared determination to persist in his plan of hostility; he hoped and trusted it would rouse the country to an interference so necessary for their salvation. He had no doubt, but that numbers, judging from the past readiness with which the Right Hon. Gentleman had relinquished former assertions, had indulged the hope he would have done so on the present occasion, and resting on that hope they had hitherto acquiesced; the Right Hon. Gentleman's conduct on the present occasion, however, effectually extinguished such hope, and he trusted the people would act accordingly.

The next point to which the Right Hon. Gentleman had adverted, Mr. Grey remarked, was the Prussian treaty, and the conduct of the Prussian troops in the course of the present campaign. Upon this, as upon former occasions of a like nature, he had availed himself of the stale trick, state secrets! Mr. Grey said, that he could not help observing, a Right Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Windham), who had vacated his seat, had, upon a former occasion, so successfully and ably combated and exposed the fallacy of such a defence, that his
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assistance that day would have been highly useful. The Right Hon. Gentleman affected to say he could not explain why the troops promised under the Prussian treaty had never made their appearance. The motion of his Hon. Friend went not to investigate into causes or effects, but merely to ascertain a matter of fact; namely, whether the money had been paid, and whether the troops stipulated for were employed? This was to be answered with the word which possessed such a charm in it—secret! He was ready to admit, indeed, that the whole was a secret—a secret why the treaty was entered into at all—a secret why such an enormous sum of money was granted—and a secret where the troops so paid for were to be found. What part of the treaty then had the King of Prussia fulfilled on his part? None that we knew of; but we did know the disasters that had happened to us from his non-performance; all the rest was enveloped in the mystery of state secrecy; and the only thing that was not a secret was, that the King of Prussia had received a considerable part of the money.

The third point alluded to by the Right Hon. Gentleman was, our situation with America. Upon which he was again obliged to have recourse to his old excuse—state secrecy. The motion, with regard to this part of it, Mr. Grey said, had only been offered, in order to afford Parliament an opportunity of preventing that war, which the obstinacy of Administration would, in all probability, give them cause to repent of hereafter.

The Right Hon. Gentleman had charged those Gentlemen with whom he had been in the habits of acting, with having continually opposed the measures adopted as necessary for the conduct of the war. He for one, Mr. Grey declared, was ready to avow the whole of his conduct upon that subject; and could not fairly be accused of throwing impediments in the way of Government; on the contrary, his conduct, and that of those with whom he acted, had been, during the war, founded upon truly constitutional principles, unless it were laid down as a fundamental proposition, that the moment ministers chose to plunge the nation into the miseries of war, all opposition to their measures and schemes must become unconstitutional. Was this charge against what was termed the Opposition well founded? In the first place, with respect to the proposition for increasing the internal force of the kingdom, did they oppose the measure itself? On the contrary, did they not endeavour to promote the arming? Their only wish was to render the mode constitutional, by legalizing, with the sanction of Parliament, those subscriptions, which, without

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without such previous consent, they contended were perfectly illegal and unconstitutional. In the next place, did they oppose the grant of the supplies? If they opposed the Prussian subsidy, they were ready to grant the same sum to be applied to other purposes. It was the application of the money in that particular way which they opposed, because they considered it as an immense sum, disposed of for very inadequate purposes. Whether they were right or wrong in so considering it, let the event declare. What was done upon the Emigrant Force Bill too; a measure so highly vaunted of at the time of its proposal, or what force was raised of those five hundred thousand men, which were to flock to our standard the moment the measure was adopted? Upon all these grounds, therefore, of opposition, instead of reproach, they had a claim to praise for their foresight, and he confessed himself proud in the part he had taken upon the several occasions.

The last topic treated on by the Right Hon. Gentleman, was the connexion recently formed between him and some political characters who had heretofore been hostile to every measure of his administration. Upon this topic, Mr. Grey declared he had little to say. The Right Hon. Gentleman had laboured to state reasons for their having passed over many points of difference which had hitherto existed between them; but he had studiously avoided the grand point which had been deemed, and long since declared to be the insurmountable obstacle to a coalition, namely, the existence of an Administration, which, both by its commencement and continuance, was held to be equally disgraceful to the House of Commons, and dangerous to the constitution; and which could not be forgiven, without full and ample atonement first made for its past misconduct. With those who had avowed that opinion, and had hitherto acted upon it, was the Right Hon. Gentleman at last connected, without any such atonement having been insisted on or made. He professed himself to be equally glad with the Right Hon. Gentleman that the discussion of the present evening had taken place, as it had afforded him an opportunity of stating his sentiments to the country at large, on which he would leave them to make their own comment. Mr. Grey concluded with declaring, that, at all events, he prayed to God, that this country might not radically suffer by an event which he could not but deem most disastrous and ominous to her future salvation.

Mr. Sheridan rose to make some reply to what had fallen from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He declared, he was sorry to find that the speech of the Right Hon. Gentleman had confirmed

assistance that day would have been highly useful. The Right Hon. Gentleman affected to say he could not explain why the troops promised under the Prussian treaty had never made their appearance. The motion of his Hon. Friend went not to investigate into causes or effects, but merely to ascertain a matter of fact; namely, whether the money had been paid, and whether the troops stipulated for were employed? This was to be answered with the word which possessed such a charm in it—secret! He was ready to admit, indeed, that the whole was a secret—a secret why the treaty was entered into at all—a secret why such an enormous sum of money was granted—and a secret where the troops so paid for were to be found. What part of the treaty then had the King of Prussia fulfilled on his part? None that we knew of; but we did know the disasters that had happened to us from his non-performance; all the rest was enveloped in the mystery of state secrecy; and the only thing that was not a secret was, that the King of Prussia had received a considerable part of the money.

The third point alluded to by the Right Hon. Gentleman was, our situation with America. Upon which he was again obliged to have recourse to his old excuse—state secrecy. The motion, with regard to this part of it, Mr. Grey said, had only been offered, in order to afford Parliament an opportunity of preventing that war, which the obstinacy of Administration would, in all probability, give them cause to repent of hereafter.

The Right Hon. Gentleman had charged those Gentlemen with whom he had been in the habits of acting, with having continually opposed the measures adopted as necessary for the conduct of the war. He for one, Mr. Grey declared, was ready to avow the whole of his conduct upon that subject; and could not fairly be accused of throwing impediments in the way of Government; on the contrary, his conduct, and that of those with whom he acted, had been, during the war, founded upon truly constitutional principles, unless it were laid down as a fundamental proposition, that the moment ministers chose to plunge the nation into the miseries of war, all opposition to their measures and schemes must become unconstitutional. Was this charge against what was termed the Opposition well founded? In the first place, with respect to the proposition for increasing the internal force of the kingdom, did they oppose the measure itself? On the contrary, did they not endeavour to promote the arming? Their only wish was to render the mode constitutional, by legalizing, with the sanction of Parliament, those subscriptions, which, without

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without such previous consent, they contended were perfectly illegal and unconstitutional. In the next place, did they oppose the grant of the supplies? If they opposed the Prussian subsidy, they were ready to grant the same sum to be applied to other purposes. It was the application of the money in that particular way which they opposed, because they considered it as an immense sum, disposed of for very inadequate purposes. Whether they were right or wrong in so considering it, let the event declare. What was done upon the Emigrant Force Bill too; a measure so highly vaunted of at the time of its proposal, or what force was raised of those five hundred thousand men, which were to flock to our standard the moment the measure was adopted? Upon all these grounds, therefore, of opposition, instead of reproach, they had a claim to praise for their foresight, and he confessed himself proud in the part he had taken upon the several occasions.

The last topic treated on by the Right Hon. Gentleman, was the connexion recently formed between him and some political characters who had heretofore been hostile to every measure of his administration. Upon this topic, Mr. Grey declared he had little to say. The Right Hon. Gentleman had laboured to state reasons for their having passed over many points of difference which had hitherto existed between them; but he had studiously avoided the grand point which had been deemed, and long since declared to be the insurmountable obstacle to a coalition, namely, the existence of an Administration, which, both by its commencement and continuance, was held to be equally disgraceful to the House of Commons, and dangerous to the constitution; and which could not be forgiven, without full and ample atonement first made for its past misconduct. With those who had avowed that opinion, and had hitherto acted upon it, was the Right Hon. Gentleman at last connected, without any such atonement having been insisted on or made. He professed himself to be equally glad with the Right Hon. Gentleman that the discussion of the present evening had taken place, as it had afforded him an opportunity of stating his sentiments to the country at large, on which he would leave them to make their own comment. Mr. Grey concluded with declaring, that, at all events, he prayed to God, that this country might not radically suffer by an event which he could not but deem most disastrous and ominous to her future salvation.

Mr. *Sheridan* rose to make some reply to what had fallen from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He declared, he was sorry to find that the speech of the Right Hon. Gentleman had confirmed

the opinion he had always entertained of him, *viz.* that he was a minister who could not be improved by experience, and who could not be cured of his rashness by the long train of calamitous events which his precipitancy or his imbecility had brought upon the country. He was extremely happy that this debate had taken place, because, if no other advantage was gained by it, at least this one had been obtained, that ministers had taken care that the Public should not be deluded by any fallacious hopes of a change of measures, by declaring themselves more than ever wedded to their destructive and visionary system of exterminating the French Jacobins. In thus pledging themselves to these ruinous measures, ministers seemed either really or affectedly to be ignorant of the total change which had taken place in the opinions of the people of this country respecting the war in Flanders. A change more sudden and more universal, he believed, had never before taken place in the popular opinions of any country. That very object, *viz.* the conquest of France, which some time since the sanguine disposition of the people, together with the delusions practised upon them, led them to look to as certain, was now treated as chimerical and absurd in the extreme; resistance abroad, and want of confidence at home, were trifling difficulties, when opposed to the irresistible spirit of crusade which possessed his Majesty's ministers. He lamented however their determination.

Had not the experience of two campaigns shewn them the impracticability of the attempt? Would not the disgraces and disasters we had suffered within the last six weeks, convince every man of the dangerous situation into which the country had been plunged by the rash measures of Administration proceeding on this principle, that we had no security for peace in treating with the present Government of France, which in fact was the only Government that had kept its faith, as he had shewn in his former speech? in which he had also put distinct questions as to the very different conduct of our allies, but had received no satisfactory answer. He would again ask, Whether the King of Prussia had not basely violated his engagements to this country? Was it not the fact, that, instead of sending the troops for which he had been paid by us, and which were to have co-operated with the British in Flanders, he kept aloof, furnished no troops, and that in consequence of his breach of faith, our own troops had been exposed to a situation in which their valour was unavailing? Was it not notorious that the King of Prussia had employed his forces in the detestable occupation of plundering and murdering the distressed Poles, in conjunction with the Empress of Russia, who had likewise

likewise failed in performing her engagements? At the time that the British fleet, with inferior force, for which ministers deserved reprobation, were gloriously combating that of the enemy, had not the Spaniards refused to send out a fleet to capture, or even to make the attempt on the American fleet, which the French regarded as their grand resource, and the sailing of which for France had been known almost a year? Was it not true that the Dutch had not a single ship of the line at sea to assist us? Had not the Emperor failed in his engagement of keeping up the number of troops he promised, and had not the King of Sardinia been deficient in that respect likewise? Thus it was evident, that the French government was the only one that appeared to have no privilege to break its faith, which all the allies had done as they found occasion.

It appeared to him, that ministers had a patent for misstating facts: With respect to what had happened in Flanders, and the present state of that country, it was curious to observe of how little value the preservation of Flanders was at present considered by the Right Hon. Gentleman: How must his mind have changed upon the subject, and how different must his opinions have been since last year, when the possession of that country, and beating the French out of it, was announced with all the pomp and lofty eloquence which the Right Hon. Gentleman had always at command, as one of the most brilliant successes, and most fortunate events, that had crowned the operations of a successful campaign? The French having recently beaten us entirely out of that country, the House was told by the same Right Hon. Gentleman, that this great disaster was nothing but a temporary discomfiture or check; so trivial, that it was not worth while to dwell upon it. When the Right Hon. Gentleman talked in that way, what was it that he would allow to be disastrous, or what misfortune could happen that he would not treat with the same indifference and contempt? The King of Prussia was said to be off entirely: What if the Emperor was likewise to withdraw himself from the war? What if the Dutch were to conclude a separate peace with France? All these, to the bold and undaunted mind of the Right Hon. Gentleman, would prove but temporary and trivial checks, unworthy of his consideration, and not of a nature that could make him relinquish his favourite object, and the continuance of a war, which already had produced so much expence of blood and treasure.

The Right Hon. Gentleman, Mr. Sheridan observed, had so particularly alluded to his Parliamentary conduct, and the opposition which he had said he always gave to the measures of Government, that he thanked the Right Hon. Gentleman

for affording him that opportunity of replying to the charge, which he had been pleased to bring against him. He had no hesitation in denying the fact, and he desired the Right Hon. Gentleman to point out an instance of his opposing any measure of Government which was actually necessary, or had obtained the sanction and approbation of Parliament. He might ask the Right Hon. Gentleman if he had ever opposed the supplies for carrying into execution the necessary operations which had been approved by Parliament. The system and object of the war, and the conduct in carrying it on, he had uniformly opposed, because he saw that the war itself was absurd, erroneous, and destructive to the country, and its conduct highly impolitic and injurious; upon all occasions where he had opposed, he had fairly and candidly stated his reasons for opposition, which the Right Hon. Gentleman had chosen to gloss over that day by a general charge of his having opposed every measure suggested by Government; a charge which was by no means true, or capable of being substantiated by proof.

It was rather unfortunate, Mr. Sheridan said, for the Right Hon. Gentleman's attack upon his conduct respecting the Prussian subsidiary treaty, that he had opposed it on the ground that no dependence could be placed on his Prussian Majesty, and that he had warned ministers of the probability of the troops bargained for being employed against the Poles, instead of the French; he had however voted for the money being raised; his only objection was to the mode of application and expenditure, and the event justified his conduct, as it had proved that he and his friends had been right in their apprehensions that the proposed object would not be answered by it. The terms of the treaty with his Prussian Majesty were, that by the 24th of May last his troops were to have been at the place of their destination to co-operate with the British: This place must of course be Flanders. Where were those Prussians? that was a State secret. How had they been employed, and where were they now? That was an impenetrable secret. What part of the treaty then had the King of Prussia fulfilled on his part? None that we knew of; but we did know the disasters that had happened to us from his non-performance; all the rest was enveloped in the mystery of State secrecy, and the only thing that is not a secret, is, that he has received a considerable part of the money. Mr. Sheridan declared, he had always opposed the doctrine of placing confidence in ministers; and, on a former occasion, he had been supported in his opinion by Mr. Windham, whose absence he regretted on that day, as he should have expected his coincidence as formerly, on this important

ant point, that no minister had a right to infer, that there existed a spirit of disaffection in those who would not give implicit confidence to Government in all the means which they chose to adopt for the purpose of carrying their measures into effect.

With regard to the project of calling for voluntary subscriptions, his opposition to it had also been given on constitutional grounds; he had expressly said that he had no objection to the measure itself, when it should have received the sanction of Parliament. The French Emigrant Bill he had opposed, because he disapproved the principle, and on the ground of its impracticability, for he could not think it possible for ministers to send into France those unfortunate men, who were certain of being executed if taken by their countrymen; and it appeared that, notwithstanding the pompous declaration of the Secretary of State (Mr. Dundas), that he expected five hundred thousand emigrants would be embodied—one hundred were not in arms. With regard to the object of the war, he was extremely happy that he had brought on this discussion, because it had drawn from the Right Hon. Gentleman an explicit declaration of his precise views; how satisfactory and gratifying that declaration might be to the country, was another question. The Right Hon. Gentleman had that night made use of a new term, and he was willing to give him the full benefit of the distinction; he had said the war was not for the extermination, but the destruction of the Jacobin system, and that there could be no peace till that took place. This held out a very great comfort and consolation to those friends to their country, and the people at large, who wished to see the blessings of peace restored, by telling them it was not within the power of possibility, nor need they expect to be relieved from the horrors of war, till his favourite scheme of destruction had been effected. He trusted, however, that when the Gentlemen who were coming into Administration, should have considered the state of responsibility in which they were to stand, they would relax somewhat with regard to the extent to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had declared, that in his opinion the war ought to be carried. It had not appeared that the French had asked us to interfere in their concerns; as they seemed well satisfied with their present government, we had no right to interfere with it. He lamented the dereliction of principle in those who had uniformly declared that they could not act with the present Administration, on account of the manner in which they had come into office, in contempt of the House of Commons, and the measures they afterwards pursued. As the day of account must at length arrive, he hoped these Gentlemen, for their own sakes, would consider the perilous situation in
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which they stood in uniting themselves with the present minister, and adopt timely measures for the restoration of peace, before it should be too late, while we possessed the means of making it on equitable terms. His own object, Mr. Sheridan scrupled not to avow, was unequivocally to acknowledge the French republic.

He concurred perfectly in opinion with his Hon. Friend (Mr. Grey) that we should be compelled to do what we had been compelled to do in the case of the American war. It was then objected that we could not treat with the infamous Congress, but eventually we were obliged to submit to that humiliation. It was at present said we could not treat with the Government of France, which yet we must certainly do in the end, for it could not be supposed that we were to carry on war while there was a man or a guinea in the country.

The Right Hon. Gentleman had objected to his using the word *despot* as one adopted by the members of the French Convention; but no insinuation of that kind should have any effect on him: If by the word *Monarch* was meant the first magistrate of any well-governed state, he would not apply it to the despot of Petersburg, or the despot of Berlin, who had been guilty of such atrocious breach of faith, such plunder and murder in Poland; in speaking of such nefarious actions, he could not be nice in the selection of his words. The Hon. Gentleman had styled those whom he called Despots the *regular powers* of Europe; a very proper name certainly for those who had so regularly broken every engagement they entered into, and with none of which it was possible to preserve good faith. These were the powers with whom we were to make alliances, as if on purpose that they might be broken; and France, the only regular power that we knew of, we were told, it was impossible to treat with. Having already shewn the pretensions which the despots had to be called regular powers, he thought it was easy to shew that France had at least been consistent in her threats and promises; we had felt that all she had said or promised to do against her enemies she had done, and all that we and our allies had promised to one another was still undone. He rejoiced, that the Public at large would, by that day's debate, have a just view of the grounds and state of the war. He had no doubt the Right Hon. Gentleman would persist in his opinions and measures; the proceedings of that day evinced his usual obstinacy. Indeed he should not expect him to retract; he knew well the loftiness of his tones, even when manifestly wrong, and his dislike to make apology for the absurdity of his conduct; it was inconsistent with his nature; his temper shewed in all cases how unfit a person he would

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would be for a garrison, because it would be impossible to keep him within the ramparts. The day would however soon come when his conduct and his views would appear to the country to have been equally disgraceful, resulting from a degree of vanity and rashness, bordering, in his opinion, upon insanity. And with regard to the war itself, he contended, that four-fifths of that House had changed their opinion, and ninety-nine out of an hundred of the people at large.

Mr. M. Robinson said a few words in favour of the motion,

Upon which the question was put, and carried without a division.

Mr. Sheridan said, that as the minister had refused to give any account of the Prussian troops, how or where they were employed, or whether Prussia had received any part of the subsidy or not, he thought it unnecessary to trouble the House with any further motion.

CAPTAINS HARVEY AND HUTT.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer moved, That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, that he would be pleased to order two monuments to be erected, in the collegiate church of Westminster, to the memory of Captain Harvey and Captain Hutt, who died of the wounds they received, in exerting their bravery and skill on the first of June, when a glorious victory had been obtained over the French at sea by the fleet commanded by the gallant Earl Howe; a motion in which he did not doubt but he should meet the unanimous concurrence of the House.

The motion was carried *nem. con.*

The address was ordered to be presented by such Members as were of his Majesty's Privy Council.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

FRIDAY, July 11.

A few minutes before three o'clock, there being several Peers in their robes in the House,

The Earl of Lauderdale said, it was exceedingly unpleasant to him to call the attention of the House to a subject that might not be agreeable to some of their Lordships, but the impropriety, if any there was, did not commence with him. Their Lordships would recollect, that a few days since a Noble Friend of his (the Duke of Norfolk) gave notice that he should on that day bring forward a motion on a very important subject. The Noble Duke was then in his place, ready to make that motion; and, considering the particular situation of the affairs
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of the country, considering that persons of very different and opposite characters had lately united to assist the Executive Government, by the wisdom of their counsels, and by all their efforts, it became, on that account, as well as for various other important reasons, highly necessary that their Lordships should hear the proposition which the Noble Duke had to submit to them. The Noble and Learned Lord, whose duty it was to be on the Woolfack, was not, however, in the House. That Noble and Learned Lord had, when the notice was given, conveyed to the Noble Duke an assurance, that he should be attended to this day. His absence was a proof of what the Noble and Learned Lord *intended* on that occasion. He would not have given the Noble Duke that assurance then, and absented himself now, if he had not intended it to answer a particular purpose; and to make it impossible for him to bring forward his proposition before Parliament was prorogued. This was a trick which would have been disgraceful to a much lower character than the Lord Chancellor of England. As it was their Lordships' duty, in his opinion, to proceed to business, notwithstanding this attempt to prevent it, he should do the only thing he could, to put their Lordships in a situation to do so; "and therefore," said the Noble Earl, "I now move, That your Lordships do proceed to elect a Speaker."

The Lord Chancellor came in soon after, and prayers being over,

The Duke of Norfolk said, that as there could not then be time for debating the motion of which he had given notice, he should decline giving their Lordships any trouble upon the subject.

The Earl of Lauderdale rose, and was again proceeding to comment upon the conduct of the Lord Chancellor, when he was interrupted by the King's arrival being announced.

His Majesty came in state to the House; and being seated on the throne, and the Commons attending at the bar (in consequence of a message carried to them by Sir Francis Molyneux, Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod), delivered the following most gracious Speech:

"My Lords and Gentlemen,

"The state of public business enables me now to close this session of Parliament; in doing which I have again to acknowledge that assiduity and zeal for the interests of my people, of which you had before given me so many proofs, and which have been so particularly manifested in the present year.

"I am persuaded that you entertain too just a sense of the nature and importance of the contest in which we are engaged to suffer your zeal to be abated,

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bated, or your perseverance shaken, by the recent successes of the enemy in the Netherlands.

"In a moment which so strongly calls for energy and vigour, it is peculiarly gratifying to me to reflect on the uniform skill and bravery of my fleets and armies; the undaunted spirit and unwearied exertions of my officers and troops in every situation; and the general public spirit of my people, which have never at any period been more conspicuous.

"I have observed, with the highest satisfaction, the rapid and valuable acquisitions made in the East and West Indies, the successful operations which have been carried on in the Mediterranean, and the brilliant and decisive victory obtained by my fleet, under the command of Earl Howe, an event which must ever be remembered as one of the most glorious in the naval history of this country.

"Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

"I return you my warmest thanks for the cheerfulness and liberality with which you have granted the large supplies which were necessary for the service of the year, and for the maintenance of a cause equally important to the security and happiness of every class of my subjects.

"My Lords and Gentlemen,

"I feel it incumbent upon me particularly to acknowledge your diligence in the investigation of the designs which had been formed against the government and constitution of these kingdoms, and to thank you for the confidence you have reposed in me on this occasion. It will be a principal object of my attention to make a vigorous and prudent use of the additional powers vested in me for the protection and security of my people; and relying, as I do, with the utmost confidence, on the uniform loyalty and public spirit of the great body of my subjects, I have no doubt of speedily and effectually repressing every attempt to disturb the public peace, and of defeating the wicked designs which have been in agitation.

"It must not, however, be forgotten, that these designs against our domestic happiness are essentially connected with the system now prevailing in France, of which the principles and spirit are irreconcilably hostile to all regular and established government; and that we are therefore called upon, by every consideration of our own internal safety, to continue our efforts in conjunction with my allies, and to persevere, with increased vigour and exertion, in a contest, from the successful termination of which we can alone expect to establish, on a solid and permanent foundation, the future security and tranquillity either of this country, or of the other nations of Europe."

Then the Lord Chancellor, by his Majesty's command, said,

"My Lords and Gentlemen,

"It is his Majesty's royal will and pleasure, that this Parliament be prorogued to Tuesday, the 19th day of August next, to be then here holden; and this Parliament is accordingly prorogued to Tuesday, the 19th day of August next."

twenty guns. From an accurate list containing the name and appointment of each, it appears, that these privateers measured 30,787 tons, carrying 1,986 guns and 8,754 men. From the efforts of a single town, therefore, it might be inferred, that the private ships of war formed a greater force during the contest with America, than the nation, with all its unanimity and zeal, was able to equip in the powerful reign of Queen Elizabeth. His Lordship commented on this important fact (for such it might, he thought, fairly be considered), as the best proof of the very great progress in improvement that our navigation had made from nearly the end of the sixteenth century to the present period.

There was strong reason to believe, Lord Hawkesbury said, that at the epoch of the *Act of Navigation*, soon after the Restoration, the whole ships which annually cleared out from England amounted only to 95,266 * tons.

The English shipping which were annually employed to carry out the whole annual cargoes from England, may be stated to have been as follows, at the several epochs hereafter mentioned:

		<i>Tons of English Shipping.</i>
The Restoration	1663-69	95,266
The Revolution	1688	190,533
The Peace of Ryfwick	1697	144,264
The last years of William III.	1700-1-2	273,693
The Wars of Queen Anne	1709-12	285,156
The first of George I.	1713-14-15	421,431
The first of George II.	1726-27-28	432,832
The peaceful Years	1736-37-38	476,941
The War of	1739-40-41	384,191
The peaceful Years	1749-50-51	629,798
The War of	1755-56-57	451,254
The first of George III. War	{ 1760	471,241
	{ 1761	508,220
The peaceful Years	1764-5-6	639,872
Ditto	1772-3-4	795,943
The American War	1775-6-7	760,798
The French War	1778	657,283
The Spanish War	1779	590,911
The Dutch War	1781	547,953
The peaceful Years	1784-5-6	926,780
Ditto	1790-1-2	1,329,979

Such, his Lordship said, had been the vast augmentation of English shipping, from the epoch of the *Act of Navigation* to the commencement of the present war. It was to be observed, however, that this quantity of tonnage contained what had

* Vide Chronological Table of Commerce, in Mr. Chalmer's Estimate.

been called the repeated voyages or entries at the Custom-house; one vessel having made more entries than one at the Custom-house, and more voyages than one in the year: So that the tonnage of the several vessels which cleared outward from England, at the before-mentioned epochs, ought to represent a greater quantity of tonnage than actually belonged to England at the time.

In 1581 an enumeration of the shipping and sailors of England had taken place, when they amounted to 72,450 tons and 14,295 mariners; and it had been stated *, that the seamen of the ships registered in the port of London in 1732 were 21,797; but it was to be regretted, that we had no enumeration of the shipping of England which could altogether be relied upon from that of 1581 down to 1787. It was one of the consequences of the *New Navigation Act* †, 26 George III. chap. 60, intitled, "An Act for the further Increase and Encouragement of Shipping and Navigation," that a register of shipping was established, whereby the number of ships, with their tonnage and men, within the British dominions might be accurately known in any subsequent year to that of 1786. This register shews that the number of ships have been continually increasing since the first account was taken in 1787, and the register demonstrates, that in 1792, England had 10,633 ships of 1,186,610 tons, navigated by 87,569 men, which affords an exhilarating contrast with the inconsiderable numbers which England possessed in 1581, when this nation first began to trim her sails on the ocean. This register also shews, that in 1792 there belonged to the British dominions 16,079 ships, 1,540,145 tons, 118,286 seamen.

[In our first report of Lord Hawkesbury's speech, given in pages 15, 16, 17, 18, of our third volume, the reader will find his Lordship's statement of the fact which suggested the expediency of a further navigation law, together with a detail of all the circumstances the incident gave rise to, and his Lordship's reasoning upon them and description of the principle and purport of the Bill he intended to bring in, with an account of the various regulations proposed to be provided for by the different clauses of the Bill, and the period when he meant it to take effect.]

* Vide Dr. Campbell's *Political Survey*, vol. i. p. 161.

† Lord Hawkesbury's Act.

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THE offices and places held by *Mr. Rose*, having been brought under discussion in both Houses of Parliament* in the course of the session, it was our intention to have subjoined the following as a note to that part of *Lord Grenville's* speech, vol. iii. p. 219. which treats on the subject of *Mr. Rose's* holding the office of Clerk of the Parliaments. As the circumstance may again be alluded to, we think it necessary to supply the defect occasioned by our accidental omission, by stating it in this place.—

There was an unanimous address of the House of Lords recommending *Mr. Rose* to his Majesty's favour in 1776, as qualified to be an useful servant to the House, which was with a view to his having the office he now is in possession of, and which was granted to him in 1783, in consequence of another unanimous address in that session, for removing a restriction his Majesty had put himself under on a former address to him, not to grant the office in reversion.

The Insertion of the following Extracts from the London Gazette may not hereafter prove useless, as a matter of reference to the Political Inquirer.

From the LONDON GAZETTE, July 12.

At the Court of St. James's, the 11th of July 1794, present the King's Most Excellent Majesty in Council.

This day the Right Hon. *William Earl Fitzwilliam* was, by his Majesty's command, sworn of his Majesty's most honourable Privy Council; and was also by his Majesty declared *Lord President of the Council*, and took his place at the Board accordingly.

This day the Right Hon. *George John Earl Spencer* was, by his Majesty's command, sworn of his Majesty's most honourable Privy Council, and took his place at the Board accordingly.

His Majesty having been pleased to appoint his Grace *William Henry Cavendish Duke of Portland*, to be one of his Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, his Grace was this day, by his Majesty's command, sworn one of his Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State accordingly.

* Vide *Mr. Sheridan's* speech, vol. iii. p. 133. *Mr. Rose's* reply, vol. iii. p. 135. and the Marquis of Lansdown's speech, vol. iii. p. 214. in which it is presumed *Mr. Rose* was alluded to, as it drew forth the defence of *Mr. Rose*, stated by *Lord Grenville* in the same debate (p. 219), which was noticed by the Marquis of Lansdown in his ultimate reply of that day, as reported p. 228 of the same volume.

Whitehall, July 11.

The King has been pleased to appoint the Right Hon. *William Windham* to be his Majesty's *Secretary at War*.

From the LONDON GAZETTE, July 19.

At the Court at St. James's, the 16th of July 1794, present the King's Most Excellent Majesty in Council.

This day the Right Hon. *William Windham* was, by his Majesty's command, sworn of his Majesty's most honourable Privy Council, and took his place at the Board accordingly.

His Majesty having been pleased to deliver the custody of the *Privy Seal* to the Right Hon. *George John Earl Spencer*, the oath of *Keeper of the Privy Seal* was this day administered to him, and his Lordship took his place at the Board accordingly.

From the LONDON GAZETTE, July 26.

At the Court at St. James's, the 23d of July 1794, present the King's Most Excellent Majesty in Council.

His Majesty having been graciously pleased to deliver the Privy Seal to *Evan Nepean*, *Stephen Cottrell*, and *James Bland Burges*, Esqrs. whom his Majesty, by letters patent under the Great Seal of Great Britain, hath constituted Commissioners for executing the office of *Keeper of the Privy Seal**, they this day took the usual oaths as Commissioners for the custody of the Privy Seal.

* It was generally understood that these Gentlemen were to hold the Privy Seal in trust for Earl Spencer, during his Lordship's absence, occasioned by his Embassy to the Court of Vienna.

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The following **BILLS** received the Royal Assent in the course of the Session, commencing January 24, and ending July 11, 1794, and are all the **PUBLIC ACTS** of that Period.

20th February. **A**N Act for raising the Sum of Eleven Millions by way of Annuities.

February 21. An Act for granting an Aid to his Majesty by a Land Tax, to be raised in Great Britain, for the Service of the Year One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety-four.

An Act for continuing and granting to his Majesty certain Duties upon Malt, Mum, Cyder, and Perry, for the Service of the Year One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety-four.

An Act for making perpetual certain Duties on Foreign Spirits, and on Sugar imported into Great Britain.

An Act for granting to his Majesty certain additional Duties upon Worts, Wash, and other Liquors brewed or made in England, for extracting Spirits for Home Consumption, and upon Spirits made in Scotland and imported into England.

An Act for granting to his Majesty certain additional Duties on Foreign Spirits imported into Great Britain.

An Act for the Regulation of his Majesty's Marine Forces while on Shore.

An Act to continue the Laws now in force for regulating the Trade between the Subjects of his Majesty's Dominions and the Inhabitants of the Territories belonging to the United States of America, so far as the same relate to the Trade and Commerce carried on between this Kingdom and the Inhabitants of the Countries belonging to the said United States.

An Act to indemnify such Persons as have omitted to qualify themselves for Offices and Employments, and to indemnify Justices of the Peace, or others, who have omitted to register or deliver in their Qualifications within the Time limited by Law, and for giving further Time for those Purposes; and to indemnify Members and Officers in Cities, Corporations, and Borough Towns, whose Admissions have been omitted to be stamped according to Law, or, having been stamped, have been lost or mislaid, and for allowing them Time to provide Admissions duly stamped; to give further Time to such Persons as have omitted to make and file Affidavits of the Execution of Indentures of Clerks to Attornies and Solicitors; and for indemnifying Deputy Lieutenants and Officers of the Militia who have neglected to transmit Descriptions of their Qualifications to the Clerks of the Peace within the Time limited by Law, and for giving further Time for that Purpose.

March 1. An Act for punishing Mutiny and Desertion, and for the better Payment of the Army and their Quarters.

An Act for preventing Money or Effects in the Hands of his Majesty's Subjects, belonging to, or disposeable by, Persons resident in France, being applied to the Use of the Persons exercising the Powers of Government in France, and for preserving the Property thereof, for the Benefit of the individual Owners thereof.

An Act for repealing the Stamp Duties on Gloves and Mittens sold by Retail.

An Act for repealing the Duties on the Register of Burials, Births, Marriages, and Christenings.

March 28. An Act for granting to his Majesty certain Stamp Duties on Indentures of Clerkships to Solicitors and Attornies, in any of the Courts of England therein mentioned.

An Act for granting to his Majesty certain additional Duties on Bricks and Tiles made in or imported into Great Britain.

An Act for regulating the Portage and Conveyance of Letters by the Carriage called the Penny Post.

An Act for granting Rates of Postage for the Conveyance of Letters and Packers between Great Britain and the Islands of Jersey and Guernsey, and within those Islands.

An Act for augmenting the Militia.

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An Act to enable the Governor and Company of the Bank of Scotland further to increase the capital Stock of the said Company.

An Act for making certain Navigable Cuts from the Towns of Buckingham, Aylebury, and Wendover, in the County of Buckingham, to communicate with the Grand Junction Navigation, authorised to be made by an Act of the last Session of Parliament, and for amending the said Act.

An Act for making and maintaining a Navigable Canal from and out of the Canal Navigation from Manchester, to or near Ashton under Lyne, and Oldham in the County Palatine of Lancaster, at the intended Aqueduct Bridge in Dukinfield, in the County of Chester, to, or near to, Chapel Milton, in the County of Derby; and a Communication by Railways or Stone Roads, from thence to Loads Knowl, within Peak Forest, in the said County of Derby; and a Branch from and out of the said intended Canal to Whaley Bridge, in the said County of Chester.

An Act for making a Navigable Canal from or near Porthwyain Lime Rocks, in the Parish of Llanyblodwell, in the County of Salop, to or near Newton, in the County of Montgomery, and also certain Collateral Cuts from the said Canal.

An Act for extending the Wyrley and Essington Canal.

An Act for making and maintaining a Navigable Canal out of and from the Warwick and Birmingham Canal, now cutting, or intended to be cut, in the Parish of Budbrooke, in the County of Warwick, into the Oxford Canal, in the Parish of Braunston, in the County of Northampton.

An Act for altering an Act passed in the Seventh Year of the Reign of his late Majesty King George the First, intituled, "An Act for making the Rivers "Mercy and Irwell navigable from Liverpool to Manchester, in the County Palatine of Lancaster," by incorporating the Proprietors of the said Navigation, and to declare their respective Shares therein to be Personal Estate.

An Act to enable the Trustees for the Care of the Road through the several Parishes of St. Michael, St. Alban, St. Peter, Shenley, Ridge, and South Mims, in the Counties of Hertford and Middlesex, to purchase certain Buildings and Hereditaments for the Purpose of making a new Road at the Entrance into the Town of St. Alban.

An Act for amending, widening, and keeping in repair, the Road from Norwich to Aylsham, in the County of Norfolk, and a certain Part of the Road leading from the said Road towards Holt, in the said County.

An Act to enlarge the Term and Powers of Three Acts passed in the Eighteenth Year of the Reign of his late Majesty King George the Second, and the Tenth and Twenty-eighth Years of his present Majesty's Reign, for repairing the Road from Birmingham, in the County of Warwick, through Elmdon, to a Lane leading by the End of Stone Bridge, in the said County.

An Act for enlarging the Term and Powers of an Act of the Twelfth Year of his present Majesty, for repairing and widening the Road from the Warwick Road, near Solihull, to the Guide Post in Kenilworth, and from Stone Bridge to meet the aforesaid Road on Balsal Common, in the County of Warwick.

An Act for enlarging the Term and Powers of certain Acts of Parliament, for repairing several Roads in the Counties of Warwick, Stafford, and Worcester, so far as relates to the Dudley District of the said Roads, and for amending certain other Roads in the County of Stafford.

An Act for enlarging the Term and Powers of Two Acts of the Twenty-sixth Year of King George the Second, and the Eighteenth Year of his present Majesty, for widening and repairing the High Road leading from Northallerton, to the South Wall of the Church Yard of the Town of Thirsk, and from the South-east End of the Street called Finkle Street, in Thirsk aforesaid, to and through the Town of Easingwold, in the County of York, to a Place called Burton Stone, near the City of York; and also the Road from Thirsk aforesaid to Topcliffe, in the North Riding of the County of York.

An Act for enlarging the Term and Power of Two Acts of the Twenty-ninth Year of King George the Second, and the Thirteenth Year of his present Majesty, for repairing and widening several Roads leading from the Town of Kingston, in the County of Hereford, and other Roads within the said County; and also for making, amending, widening, and keeping in repair, certain other Roads within the said County, adjoining, or lying near to, the Roads comprised in the said Acts.

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April 4. An Act for repealing the Duties on Paper, Pasteboard, Millboard, Scaleboard, and Glazed Paper, and for granting other Duties in lieu thereof.

An Act for granting Annuities to satisfy certain Navy and Victualling Bills, and for providing for the regular Payment of all Navy and Victualling Bills that shall be issued in future.

An Act for allowing Vessels, employed in the Greenland Whale Fishery, to complete their full Number of Men at certain Ports, for a limited Time.

An Act for amending and making perpetual an Act made in the Twenty-seventh Year of the Reign of his present Majesty, intituled, "An Act for the Encouragement of the Arts of designing and printing Linens, Cottons, Callicoes, and Mullins, by vesting the Properties thereof in the Designers, Printers, and Proprietors, for a limited Time."

An Act for making and maintaining a Navigable Canal from the Calder Navigation, at or near Sowerby Bridge Wharf, in the Parish of Halifax, in the West Riding of the County of York, to join the Canal of his Grace the Duke of Bridgewater, in the Parish of Manchester, in the County Palatine of Lancaster, and also certain Cuts from the said intended Canal.

An Act for making and maintaining a Navigable Canal, from, or nearly from, Bury Bridge, in the Parish of Bury, by Haslington, to, or nearly to, Church Kirk, all in the County Palatine of Lancaster.

An Act for making and maintaining a Navigable Canal from and out of the Canal of Sir John Ramsden, Baronet, at or near the Town of Huddersfield, in the West Riding of the County of York, to join and communicate with the Canal Navigation from Manchester, to or near Ashton under Lyne and Oldham, at or near the Town of Ashton under Lyne aforesaid, in the County Palatine of Lancaster.

An Act for paving and otherwise improving the Town of Tiverton, in the County of Devon.

An Act for amending and repairing the Roads from a Place called Scaddow-Gate, in the Parish of Ticknall, to the Burton upon Trent and Ashby de la Zouch Turnpike Road, at or near a Place called the Wooden Box, and certain other Roads therein mentioned, in the Counties of Derby and Leicester.

An Act for enlarging the Term and Powers of Three several Acts passed in the Twenty-fifth and Twenty-ninth Years of the Reign of his late Majesty King George the Second, and the Seventeenth Year of the Reign of his present Majesty, so far as the same relate to the amending and widening of the Road from Harrogate, through Ripley and Ripon, to the North-east Corner of Hutton Moor, and from the East End of Kirby Moor, to the Town of Ripon aforesaid.

An Act for enlarging the Term and Powers of certain Acts of Parliament, for repairing the Road leading from the Town of Ludlow, in the County of Salop, through Woolferton and Little Hereford, to a place called Monk's Bridge, in the said County, and also from the said Town of Ludlow, to a Place or House called the Maidenhead at Orleton, in the County of Hereford.

An Act for enlarging the Term and Powers of certain Acts of Parliament for amending, widening, and keeping in repair, several Roads leading from the Market House, and elsewhere, in the Town of Ludlow, in the County of Salop, and also the Road leading from the Turnpike or Side Gate, in the Parish of Ashford Bowden, to the Turnpike Road on Clee Hill, in the said County; and for amending, widening, and keeping in repair, the Road from the Craven Arms, in the Parish of Stanton Lacy, to Bowden, in the said County.

An Act for amending, widening, altering, diverting, and improving the Road leading from the Town of Rochdale, to a Place called Edenfield, in the Parish of Bury, all in the County Palatine of Lancaster.

April 17. An Act for raising a certain Sum of Money, by Loans or Exchequer Bills, for the Service of the Year One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety-four.

An Act for raising a further Sum of Money, by Loans or Exchequer Bills, for the Service of the Year One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety-four.

An Act for granting to his Majesty certain additional Duties on Glass imported into, or made in, Great Britain.

An Act for making perpetual certain Duties of Excise on Distilleries, and on Licences granted to Distillers in Scotland, and for appropriating the said Duties.

An Act for enabling the Commissioners of the Stamp-Duties to stamp Bills of Exchange and Notes in certain Cases.

An Act for defraying the Charge of the Pay and Clothing of the Militia in that Part of Great Britain called England, for One Year, beginning the Twenty-fifth Day of March, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety-four.

An Act for encouraging and disciplining such Corps or Companies of Men as shall voluntarily enrol themselves for the Defence of their Counties, Towns, or Coasts, or for the General Defence of the Kingdom during the present War.

An Act for indemnifying all Persons who have been concerned in advising or carrying into Execution an Order of the Lords Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury, respecting the Exportation of Pot Ashes or Pearl Ashes; for preventing Suits in consequence of the same; for authorising his Majesty to prohibit the Exportation, or carrying Coastwise, of Pot Ashes or Pearl Ashes; and for making further Provisions relative thereto.

An Act for indemnifying Governors, Lieutenant-Governors, and Persons acting as such, in the West India Islands, who have permitted the Importation and Exportation of Goods and Commodities in Foreign Bottoms.

An Act to continue several Laws relative to the Exportation of Culm to Lisbon; and to the ascertaining the Strength of Spirits by Clark's Hydrometer.

An Act to remove certain Difficulties in the Execution of the Powers vested in the Commissioners appointed by Two Acts passed in the Thirteenth Year of the Reign of Queen Ann and in the Eleventh Year of the Reign of King George the First, for making the River Nene, or Nen, running from Northampton to Peterborough, navigable, so far as the same relate to the Navigation between Peterborough and Thrapston Bridge.

An Act for extending and improving the Birmingham Canal Navigations.

An Act for making and maintaining a Navigable Canal, with certain Railways and Stone Roads, from several Collieries in the County of Somerset, to communicate with the intended Kennet and Avon Canal, in the Parish of Bradford, in the County of Wilts.

An Act for making a Navigable Canal from the River Kennet, at or near the Town of Newbury, in the County of Berks, to the River Avon, at or near the City of Bath, and also certain Navigable Cuts therein described.

An Act for paving the Footways in the Town of Abingdon, in the County of Berks; for better cleansing, lighting, and watching the Streets, Lanes, Passages, and Places in the said Town; for removing and preventing Encroachments, Obstructions, Nuisances, and Annoyances therein; and for otherwise improving the said Town.

An Act for taking down and rebuilding the Parish Church of Saint Alkmund, in the Town of Shrewsbury, in the County of Salop.

An Act for altering, repairing, and widening the Road from Burtry Ford, in the County of Durham, to Alston, in the County of Cumberland, and from Alston afore-said, by the Dyke, to Burnstones, in the County of Northumberland.

An Act for repairing and widening the Road leading from Saint Martin, Stamford Baron, to Kettering, and from Oundle to Middleton Lane, in the Parish or Hamlet of Middleton, in the County of Northampton.

An Act for continuing the Term of so much of an Act of the Twelfth Year of his present Majesty as relates to the Road from Carter's Bridge, in the Parish of Chatteris, within the Isle of Ely, in the County of Cambridge, to the Forty-foot Bridge, in the Parish of Ramsay, in the County of Huntingdon.

An Act for amending, widening, altering, and keeping in repair, the Road from Dunchurch to Southam, in the County of Warwick.

An Act for repairing the Road from Stirling to Dumbarton, and several other Roads in the Counties of Stirling, Dumbarton, and Perth.

An Act for enlarging the Terms and Powers of Two Acts made in the Twentieth and Thirtieth Years of the Reign of his late Majesty King George the Second, for repairing the High Road leading from the North End of the Cow Cawsey, near the Town of Newcastle upon Tyne, to the Town of Belford, and from thence to Buckton Burn, in the County of Northumberland.

May 9. An Act for granting to his Majesty a certain Sum of Money out of the Consolidated Fund, for applying a certain Sum of Money therein mentioned for the Service of the Year One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety-four, and for further appropriating the Supplies granted in this Session of Parliament.

An Act for granting to his Majesty a certain Sum of Money, to be raised by a Lottery.

An Act for granting to his Majesty certain Duties of Customs on Slate, Stone and Marble.

An Act for granting to his Majesty the Sum of Two Hundred Thousand Pounds, to be issued and paid to the Governor and Company of the Bank of England, to be by them placed to the Account of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt.

An Act for repealing so much of an Act, made in the Seventh Year of the Reign of his present Majesty, as directs that no Cambric or Lawn shall be imported from Ireland until the Importation of Cambrics and French Lawns into Ireland shall be prohibited by Law; to allow the Importation of Cambrics and French Lawns from the Austrian Netherlands for a limited Time, for making more effectual an Act, made in the Twenty-fourth Year of the Reign of his present Majesty, for the more effectual Prevention of Smuggling in this Kingdom; and for preventing the fraudulent re-landing of Tobacco shipped for Exportation.

An Act to empower the East India Company to continue a Bond Debt of Two Millions, and to increase the same by a further Sum, as Circumstances may require.

An Act to enable Subjects of France to enlist as Soldiers in Regiments to serve on the Continent of Europe, and in certain other Places, and to enable his Majesty to grant Commissions to Subjects of France to serve and receive Pay as Officers in such Regiments, or as Engineers, under certain Restrictions.

An Act for granting to Foreign Ships, put under his Majesty's Protection, the Privileges of Prize Ships, under certain Regulations and Restrictions; for allowing Aliens in Foreign Colonies, surrendered to his Majesty, to exercise the Occupations of Merchants or Factors; and for repealing an Act, passed in the Twelfth Year of the Reign of his late Majesty, intituled, "An Act for granting a Liberty to carry Sugars of the Growth, Produce, or Manufacture of any of his Majesty's Sugar Colonies in America, from the said Colonies directly to Foreign Parts, in Ships built in Great Britain, and navigated according to Law;" and also so much of an Act, passed in the Fifteenth Year of the Reign of his late Majesty, as amends the said Act.

An Act to amend an Act, passed in the last Session of Parliament, intituled, "An Act to provide for the Families of Persons chosen by Lot to serve in the Militia of this Kingdom, and of Substitutes serving therein; and to explain and amend an Act of Parliament, passed in the Twenty-sixth Year of his present Majesty, intituled, An Act for amending and reducing into One Act of Parliament, the Laws relating to the Militia in that Part of Great Britain called England;" and also an Act made in this present Session of Parliament, intituled, "An Act for augmenting the Militia."

An Act to continue an Act, made in the last Session of Parliament, for establishing Courts of Judicature in the Island of Newfoundland; and to revive and continue so much of Two Acts, made in the Tenth and Sixteenth Years of his present Majesty's Reign, as relates to regulating the Fees of the Officers of the Customs, and of the Naval Officers in the British Colonies in America, and of the Officers of the Customs in the Island of Newfoundland.

An Act to enable his Majesty to establish a Court of Criminal Judicature in Norfolk Island.

An Act for taking of Special Bail in Actions and Suits depending in the Court of Common Pleas of the County Palatine of Lancaster.

An Act for building a new Shire Hall for the County of Stafford.

An Act for paving, cleansing, lighting, watching, watering, and otherwise improving and keeping in repair, the Streets, Squares, and other Public Passages and Places, which are and shall be made upon certain Pieces of Grounds in the Parishes of St. Pancras, St. George the Martyr, and St. George Bloomsbury, or some or one of them, in the County of Middlesex, belonging to the Hospital for the Maintenance and Education of exposed and deserted Young Children, commonly called the Foundling Hospital.

An Act for the better Relief, Regulation, and Employment of the Poor, within the Town of Bedford, in the County of Bedford.

An Act to alter and amend an Act of the Twenty-third Year of his present Majesty, for improving the Navigation of the River Trent, and for making and maintaining a Navigable Canal from the said River in the Parish of Beeston, to join

the Nottingham Canal, in the Parish of Lenton, in the County of Nottingham, and also certain Cuts on the Side of the said River.

An Act to continue the Term and enlarge the Powers of an Act, made in the Twelfth Year of the Reign of his present Majesty, intituled, "An Act for deepening, cleaning, scouring, preserving, and maintaining the Harbour of Ayr; for enlarging and improving the Quays and Piers; for erecting Docks, Breasts, Jettees, and Piers; and for regulating Ships, Lighters, and other Vessels trading into, and going out of, the said Harbour; and for other Purposes therein mentioned."

An Act to enable the Company of Proprietors of the Canal Navigation from Leeds to Liverpool to complete the said Navigation, and to vary the Line thereof, and to raise a further Sum of Money for those Purposes; and for making a Navigable Branch therein described from the intended new Line of the said Canal.

An Act for making and maintaining a Navigable Canal from the Coventry Canal, at or near Marston Bridge in the Parish of Bedworth, in the County of Warwick, to a certain Close in the Parish of Ashby de la Zouch, in the County of Leicester; and for continuing the same from thence, in one Line, to the Lime Works at Ticknall, in the County of Derby, and in another Line, to the Lime Works at Cloughhill, in the said County of Leicester, with certain Cuts or Branches from the said Canal.

An Act for making and maintaining a Navigable Canal from Wisbech River, at or near a Place called the Old Sluice, in the Town of Wisbech, in the Isle of Ely, and County of Cambridge, to join the River Nene, in the Parish of Outwell, in the said Isle of Ely, and in the County of Norfolk, and for improving and maintaining the Navigation of the said River from Outwell Church to Selter's Load Sluice.

An Act to continue the Term and enlarge the Powers of Two Acts, made in the Seventeenth Year of the Reign of his late Majesty King George the Second, and the Seventh Year of the Reign of his present Majesty, for continuing the Duty of Two Pennies Scots, or a Sixth Part of a Penny Sterling, upon every Scots Pint of Ale and Beer, which shall be brewed for Sale, brought into, tapped, or sold within the Town of Borrowstounness and Liberties thereof, in the County of Linlithgow, and for extending the same over the Parish of Borrowstounness; for repairing the Harbour of the said Town, and for other Purposes therein mentioned.

An Act to continue the Term and enlarge the Powers of an Act, made in the Twenty-ninth Year of the Reign of this present Majesty, intituled, "An Act for repairing the Roads in the County of Forfar, and for regulating the Statute Labour within the same;" and for repairing several other Roads in the said County, and for building a Bridge over the River South Esk, near Finhaven.

An Act to continue the Term and enlarge the Powers of several Acts of Parliament, for repairing the Highways between Tyburn and Uxbridge, in the County of Middlesex, and for amending the Road leading from Brent Bridge over Hanwell Heath, through the Parishes of Hanwell, New Brentford, and Ealing, to the Great Western Road in the said County; and for lighting, watching, and watering the Highway between Tyburn and Kenfington Gravel Pits.

An Act for enlarging the Term and Powers of an Act of the Eleventh Year of his present Majesty, for repairing the Road between the Bear Inn, in Reading, and Puntfield, in the County of Berks, and several other Roads in the said County.

May 23. An Act for saving to his Majesty the Duty of New Subsidy on Tobacco imported into that Part of Great Britain called Scotland.

An Act for enabling his Majesty to raise the Sum of Two Millions Five Hundred Thousand Pounds for the Uses and Purposes therein mentioned.

An Act to empower his Majesty to secure and detain such Persons as his Majesty shall suspect are conspiring against his Person and Government.

An Act for extending the Time limited by an Act of this Session for delivering in Navy and Victualling Bills.

An Act for extending the Provisions of an Act, passed in the Twenty-fifth Year of his present Majesty's Reign, for the better examining and auditing the Public Accounts of the Board of Ordnance, the Commissioners of the Navy, the Commissioners for Victualling the Navy, and the Commissioners of Sick and Hurt.

An Act to prevent the Removal of Suits from the inferior Courts in the County Palatine of Lancaster into the Court of Common Pleas of the said County Palatine.

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An Act to continue so much of several Laws respecting the Transportation and Imprisonment of Offenders as relates to the Removal of Offenders to temporary Places of Confinement.

An Act for further continuing an Act, made in the Fifth Year of the Reign of his late Majesty, intituled, "An Act to prevent the committing of Frauds by "Bankrupts."

An Act to enable his Majesty to grant, in Fee Simple, certain Estates vested in him, by reason of the Attainders of the Persons therein named, to the Descendants of such attainted Persons.

An Act for vesting in John Wilkinson, Esq. in Trust for the Assignees of Joseph Freeman and Thomas Grace, a Messuage and other Hereditaments in St. James's Square, purchased by the said Joseph Freeman of Matthias de Gandasequi, an Alien; and for discharging the same from the Right of the Crown in respect of the Alienage.

An Act for the better Observation of the Lord's-Day, by Persons exercising the Trade of Bakers.

An Act for better regulating and governing the Watermen, Wherry-men, and Lightermen, upon the River of Thames, between Gravesend and Windsor.

An Act for the more effectually repairing of such Parts of the Highways of this Kingdom as are to be repaired by Two Parishes.

An Act for taking down and re-building the Parish Church of Tipton, otherwise Tibbington, in the County of Stafford, and for enlarging the Cemetery or Burial Ground belonging thereto.

An Act for making and maintaining a Navigable Canal from the Town of Swansea, in the County of Glamorgan, into the Parish of Ystradgunlais, in the County of Brecon.

An Act for amending and altering certain Acts of Parliament, for making and maintaining a Navigable Canal from the Coventry Canal Navigation to the City of Oxford.

An Act for improving the Outfall of the River Welland, in the County of Lincoln, and for the better Drainage of the Fen Lands, low Grounds, and Marshes, discharging their Waters through the same into the Sea, and for altering and improving the Navigation of the said River Welland, by means of a new Cut, to commence below a certain Place called the Reservoir, and to be carried from thence, through the enclosed Marshes and open Salt Marshes, into Wyberton Roads, between the Port of Boston and a Place called the Scalp, and for disposing of the Bare or White Sands adjoining to the said River, and for building a Bridge over the said Cut.

An Act for paving and otherwise improving the Town of Abergavenny, and the Limits thereof, in the County of Monmouth.

An Act to amend and enlarge the Powers of an Act, passed in the Twenty-eighth Year of the Reign of his present Majesty, intituled, "An Act for the better paving, cleansing, and lighting the Town of Cambridge, for removing and preventing Obstructions and Annoyances, and for widening the Streets, Lanes, and other Passages, within the said Town."

An Act for building a new Bridge over the River Parrett, within the Borough of Bridgwater, in the County of Somerset, and for repairing, maintaining, and extending the Quays in the Port of Bridgwater aforesaid, for abolishing the ancient and accustomed Duties, and for imposing certain new Duties at the Port of Bridgwater aforesaid instead thereof; for regulating the Moorings and Stations of Ships and Vessels in the said Port; and for imposing a certain Toll on Horses, Carriages, and Cattle.

An Act for allowing the Exercise of an Invention of a new Method of tanning Hides and Skins.

An Act to enable the Lords Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury to ascertain what Sum shall be paid into his Majesty's Exchequer, in full Satisfaction of the Debt due on the Mortgage made by the late John Gardner Kemeys, Esq. in trust for the late Right Honourable Richard Rigby, in case it shall appear to the said Lords Commissioners that it will be necessary to resort to the mortgaged Premises, in order to recover the Balance due from the said Richard Rigby to his Majesty.

An Act for amending, widening, altering, improving, and keeping in repair, the Road from Wolverhampton, in the County of Stafford, to Ivetsey Bank, in the Parish of Blimhill, in the said County.

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An Act for continuing the Term, and altering and enlarging the Powers of several Acts of Parliament therein mentioned, so far as the same relate to the repairing and amending of the Roads leading from Leeds, through Bradford and Horton, and through Bowling and Wibsey, to Halifax, and also the Roads called Bowling Lane and Little Horton Lane, in the West Riding of the County of York.

An Act for more effectually amending, widening, and keeping in repair, the Roads leading from the Town of Tewkesbury, in the County of Gloucester, to the several Places therein mentioned, being the First District of Roads described in Two Acts of Parliament, passed in the Twenty-ninth Year of the Reign of his late Majesty King George the Second, and the Fourth Year of the Reign of his present Majesty, and for altering the Course of Part of the said Roads, and also for making and keeping in repair a Road from Simmond's Ford Brook to the Turnpike Road leading to Eveham, in the County of Worcester, at or near Beckford Inn in the said County of Gloucester, and from Gotherington to the Turnpike Road leading from Cheltenham to Stow on the Wold, at or near Sireford Inn, in the said County of Gloucester, and from Stump Cross, in the Parish of Diddbrook, to the Town of Stow on the Wold, in the County of Gloucester aforesaid.

An Act for enlarging the Term and Powers of certain Acts of Parliament, for repairing several Roads in the Counties of Worcester and Warwick, so far as relates to the Road leading from the Town of Bromsgrove to the Town of Dudley, in the County of Worcester, and for making a more commodious Road near the Town of Dudley.

An Act for repairing and widening the Road from a Place called Black Grove, in the Parish of Rawreth, over Battle's Bridge, to the Town of Chelmsford, in the County of Essex.

An Act for making and repairing several Roads leading across the County of Stirling.

An Act for making and repairing certain Roads in the Counties of Clackmanan and Perth.

An Act for enlarging the Term and Powers of an Act, made in the Fourteenth Year of the Reign of his present Majesty, intituled, "An Act to continue the Terms of Two Acts, made in the Twenty-sixth and Twenty-seventh Years of the Reign of his late Majesty King George the Second, for repairing several Roads leading into the City of Glasgow, so far as the same relate to the Roads from the City of Glasgow to Yoker Bridge, to Renfrew Bridge, to the Three Mile House, to the Town of Airdrie, and from the Village of Gorbals to the Chapel of Cam-buslang, in the Counties of Lanerk and Renfrew," so far as respects the Road from the Toll House in Paisley Lane, at the West Side of the Entry to the New Bridge of Glasgow, by or near Park House, to the East End of the Bridge at Renfrew, and from Park House to the Three Mile House in the County of Lanerk, and for more effectually making, repairing, widening, and keeping in repair, the said Roads.

June 11. An Act to enable the Commissioners of his Majesty's Stamp Duties to stamp the Paper used for printing Newspapers thereon in Sheets of Single Demy Paper, instead of Sheets of Double Demy Paper.

An Act for the better Management of the Land Revenue of the Crown; and for the Sale of Fee Farm and other unimprovable Rents.

An Act for the further Encouragement of British Mariners, and for other Purposes therein mentioned.

An Act to exempt Ships of War, and Private Ships or Vessels of War, taken as Prize, from Payment of Duty.

An Act for directing the Appointment of Commissioners to administer certain Oaths and Declarations, required by Law to be taken and made by Persons offering to vote at the Election of Members to serve in Parliament.

An Act for the Discharge of certain Insolvent Debtors.

An Act for varying some of the Provisions in an Act of the Thirteenth Year of his present Majesty's Reign, respecting the Public Highways within that Part of Great Britain called England, which relate to the Performance of Statute Duty.

An Act for supplying such of the French Islands as may be in his Majesty's Possession, with the several Sorts of Corn, Meal, Flour, and Biscuit, necessary for the Maintenance of the Inhabitants of the said Islands.

An Act to enable the Rector of the Parish of St. Stephen, in the City of Bristol, for the Time being, and the Feoffees of the Lands, Tenements, and Hereditaments, belonging to the same Parish, to sell and re-convey to the Mayor, Burgeffes, and Commonalty of the City of Bristol, a certain Plot of Ground situate within, and belonging to, the said Parish, and for applying the Monies arising by such Sale, and certain other Monies, to the Purposes of an Act, passed in the Fourteenth Year of the Reign of his present Majesty, for making commodious Ways and Passages within the Parish of Saint Stephen, in the City of Bristol, and for enlarging the Burying Ground belonging to the said Parish.

An Act for better regulating the Harbour of Dover, in the County of Kent.

An Act for vesting certain Messuages, Lands, Tenements, and Hereditaments, in Trustees for the better securing his Majesty's Batteries and other Works in the Counties of Kent and Devon.

An Act for embanking and otherwise fencing from the Sea, the Lands on the Sea Coasts of the Parish of Abergele, in the County of Denbigh, and Rhidian Marsh, in the several Parishes of Abergele aforesaid, and of Saint Asaph and Rhydlan, and the Franchise of Rhydlan, in the County of Flint, and sundry other Marshes, Commons, and Waste Lands in the said Parish of Rhydlan, and in the several Parishes of Diserth and Melidan, in the said County of Flint; and to cut and make in or through the same, or some Part thereof, one or more Aqueducts, or other Water Courses and Drains; and to inclose, divide, and sell competent Parts of the said several Marshes, Commons, and Waste Lands, to defray the Expences of the said Works; and raise a Fund for the future Repair and Preservation thereof.

An Act to continue the Term, and alter and enlarge the Powers of an Act, passed in the Twelfth Year of the Reign of his present Majesty, for repairing and widening several Roads from Aldermaston, in the County of Berks, to Basingstoke, and from Aldermaston aforesaid to the Turnpike Road from Basingstoke to Andover, at or near Worting, and to the Turnpike Road leading to Winchester, at Popnam Lane, in the County of Southampton.

An Act to continue the Term, and to reduce into One Act the Powers of Four several Acts, passed in the Fifth Year of the Reign of his late Majesty King George the First, and in the Ninth and Thirty-third Years of the Reign of his late Majesty King George the Second, and in the Fifteenth Year of the Reign of his present Majesty, for repairing the Road from Beaconsfield, in the County of Buckingham, to Stoken Church, in the County of Oxford.

An Act for amending and keeping in repair the Road leading from Lyne Bridge, through Longtown, to the Scotch Dyke, and from Longtown to the Bridge over the River of Sark, in the County of Cumberland.

July 7. An Act for more effectually preserving Money or Effects, in the Hands of his Majesty's Subjects, belonging to, or disposible by, Persons resident in France, for the Benefit of the individual Owners thereof.

An Act to continue an Act, made in the last Session of Parliament, intituled, "An Act for establishing Regulations respecting Aliens arriving in this Kingdom, or resident therein in certain Cases."

An Act to explain so much of an Act, made in the Twenty-eighth Year of his present Majesty's Reign, intituled, "An Act for the further Regulation of the Trials of controverted Elections or Returns of Members to serve in Parliament," as relates to the Time of presenting certain renewed Petitions, and taking the same into Consideration.

An Act for amending so much of an Act, passed in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Years of the Reign of his late Majesty King Charles the Second, intituled, "An Act for ordering the Forces in the several Counties of this Kingdom," as relates to the Militia of the City of London; and for the better ordering the same.

An Act for erecting a Penitentiary House or Houses for confining and employing Convicts.

An Act to continue, for a limited Time, and to amend an Act, passed in the last Session of Parliament, intituled, "An Act to continue, for a limited Time, and to amend several Acts of Parliament, for regulating the shipping and carrying Slaves in British Vessels from the Coast of Africa."

APPENDIX.

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**WOODFALL'S
PARLIAMENTARY
REPORTS.**

VOL. I.

Session 1794.

**WOODFALL'S
PARLIAMENTARY
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VOL. II.

Session 1794.

**WOODFALL'S
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VOL. III.

Session 1794.

**WOODFALL'S
PARLIAMENTARY
REPORTS.**

VOL. IV.

Session 1794.

DIRECTIONS TO THE BINDER.

THE Engraving of Mr. PITT to face Title-page of Vol. I.

The Engraving of Mr. FOX to face Title-page of Vol. II.

The Engraving of Mr. SHERIDAN to face Title-page of Vol. III.

The Engraving of Lord GRENVILLE to face Title-page of Vol. IV.

The Appendix to Vol. III. to follow the end of the Debates in that Volume.

The Appendix to Vol. IV. to follow Page 424, unless the Continuation of the Reports of the Secret Committees be particularly directed to be bound together; for which the folios are adapted.

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DIRECTIONS TO THE BUREAU
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SECOND REPORT

FROM

The COMMITTEE *of* SECRECY *of the*
HOUSE *of* COMMONS.

The COMMITTEE to whom the several Papers referred to in His Majesty's Message of the 12th Day of May 1794, and which were presented (sealed up) to the House, by Mr. Secretary Dundas, upon the 12th and 13th Days of the said Month, by His Majesty's Command, were referred; and who were directed to examine the Matters thereof, and report the same, as they should appear to them, to the House;

HAVE further proceeded in the examination of the books and papers referred to them by the House, and of such other information as they have since obtained.

The latter has consisted of a variety of examinations and depositions taken before the Privy Council, of papers found in the custody of different persons who have been apprehended, and of accounts received by the Secretary of State relative to discoveries made at Edinburgh, and in different parts of Scotland; all which have been laid before your Committee.

The result appears to your Committee strongly to confirm all the propositions which they found it their duty, on the outset of their inquiry, to submit to the House, and to leave no doubt of the nature, extent, and malignity of the extravagant designs which have been formed, of the regularity and system with which these designs have been pursued, or of the rapid progress of the measures which had been taken in order to attempt to carry them speedily into execution.

Before the Committee submit to the House such further details as appear necessary to give a general and comprehensive view of the subject, and to show the origin and progress of the plan which has been in agitation, they think it right to call the attention of the House to some transactions of a recent date, and which appear to be of so much importance as to deserve a separate statement.

The first of these has already been shortly referred to in the former Report, and relates to the measures taken for providing arms, to
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be distributed among the members of the several Societies, and for preparing the means of employing actual force in the execution of their project.

The circumstance which first came under the observation of your Committee, containing a distinct trace of measures of this description, was a letter from a person at Sheffield, by profession a printer (who has since absconded), which was thus addressed—'Citizen Hardy, 'Secretary of the London Corresponding Society,' and which was found in the possession of Hardy on the 12th day of May last, when he was taken into custody.

The letter is as follows:

'Fellow Citizens,

Sheffield, April 24, 1794.

'The barefaced aristocracy of the present administration has made it necessary that we should be prepared to act on the defensive against any attack they may command their newly armed minions to make upon us. A plan has been hit upon; and if encouraged sufficiently, will, no doubt, have the effect of furnishing a quantity of pikes to the patriots; great enough to make them formidable. The blades are made of steel, tempered and polished after an approved form. They may be fixed into any shafts; but fir ones are recommended, of the girth of the accompanying hoops at the top end, and about an inch more at the bottom. The blades and hoops, more than which cannot be properly sent to any great distance, will be charged one shilling. Money to be sent with the order. As the institution is in its infancy, immediate encouragement is necessary.

Struck through in the original. { 'Orders may be sent to the Secretary of the Sheffield Constitutional Society.

'Signed.

'To prevent post suspicion, direct to' [Here follows, in the original, the name of the person to whom the letters were to be addressed, and his residence at Sheffield.]

This letter contained another inclosed, directed to the Secretary of the Norwich Patriotic Societies, which was found in the possession of the Secretary to the London Corresponding Society; and which is as follows:

'Fellow Citizen,

'The barefaced aristocracy of the present administration has made it necessary to prepare to act upon the defensive, in case of any attack upon the patriots.

'A plan has been formed for carrying into effect this necessary business. Pike blades are made with hoops for the shafts to fit the top ends; the bottom end of the shafts should be about an inch thicker; and *fir* is recommended for the shafts, selected

- * selected by persons who are judges of wood. The blades and
- * hoops will be sold at the rate of one shilling, properly tempered
- * and polished. The money sent with the orders.

* Signed.

‘Direct to’ [Here follows, in the original, the name of the person to whom the letters were to be addressed, and his residence at Sheffield] ‘to prevent the Postmaster’s suspicion.’

Your Committee soon after found that by the different examinations taken before the Privy Council, it was fully established that the general idea of procuring arms (either musquets or pikes) to be distributed among the members, had of late been frequently the subject of conversation at different divisions among the leading members of the Corresponding Society, and among persons who have been most active in the measures lately taken; that although these conversations had frequently taken place, they had generally been after the business of the meetings was closed, and when only a few persons remained. It appears indeed to have been, in a great measure, agreed that this plan was not to be publicly mentioned at the divisions; particularly it was recommended by one of the most active persons not to mention it till the new plan of constitution for the Society was settled. And it has appeared (in the course of this investigation) that the arming business was all done by private members, and that it was held not fit to talk of the pikes but to those who were to be trusted: That the general business was done by a Committee of Delegates; but there was a Secret Committee of five persons, who transacted what was not to be entrusted to the whole of the Corresponding Society; that they meet at private houses, and that all the correspondence comes to them, and what they think proper is laid before the Society. But although this plan of precaution and concealment must have prevented the discovery of a great part of this system, instances have occurred of proceedings at some of the divisions of the Corresponding Society, relative to procuring arms, which your Committee have been enabled to ascertain. As early as November 1793, at a meeting of a division of the Society, held at a place named to the Committee, a violent speech was made by a member of the Society, recommending that arms should be procured, and mentioning that they were provided with arms and pikes at Sheffield; and another member said it would be good to provide pikes at six-pence each: Afterwards, in the month of February last, at a meeting of one of the divisions of the Corresponding Society named to the Committee, and at a place ascertained to them, it was proposed to issue new books, with the names and places of abode of the several members, and that the names of those who lived in the same neighbourhood should be placed together, that they might easily be assembled upon any emergency, in case government should attempt to disperse their meetings; and a resolution for this purpose was passed soon after at a subsequent meeting.

At the same meeting a member of another division attended, and stated to the Chairman, that he came to make a report from his division. He stated a rumour that the Habeas Corpus Act would be soon suspended. This intelligence he was deputed to give, that the Society at large might be prepared for the event. Upon this a speech was made by a person, who was a member of the Committee mentioned in the former Report, in which he recommended to each member to provide himself with arms and ammunition, in order to defend himself against any persons who might attack him, whether they should be of this country, Prussians, Hessians, or Hanoverians. And in the beginning of April last, at the same division, it appears that a report was made from the General Committee, That an answer had been received from the Society for Constitutional Information, expressive of their desire to co-operate with them in obtaining their great end; and desiring a deputation might be sent to consult and deliberate with them. In consequence a certain number of the Committee were appointed: And on this occasion one of the members recommended to the citizens not to sit tamely silent and inactive, but to rouse themselves, and not only with words, but arms, assert their rights: He said, they were on the eve of a general meeting, and they should go with their minds prepared to adopt a system which might be reduced to speedy practice, and rescue their fellow-citizens (meaning the Scots Delegates) from their degrading situation. It also appears to your Committee, that a plan was in contemplation to subdivide each division into tythings, and to appoint tything-men to each, for the purpose 'of rendering themselves useful in case of emergency;' which was explained to mean, that in case the Society should be interrupted by peace officers, or a press gang, they should resist any such interruption. As another instance of the measures taken to instigate the people to arm, an account was given of a hand-bill produced at one of the meetings, which was to the following effect:

- ' The Ins tell us we are in danger of invasion from the French.
- ' The Outs tell us that we are in danger from the Hessians and Hanoverians.
- ' In either case we should arm ourselves. Get arms, and learn how to use them.'

Several copies of this hand-bill were proved to have been publicly produced at a meeting of one of the divisions, by a person who said he had printed them for the purpose of distributing as many as possible.

In the progress of the inquiry, information was received from a witness, whose accuracy has since been confirmed in a variety of striking instances, that a person named in the information, an active promoter of these measures, and a Delegate of one of the divisions, had shown the witness a pike in his possession, of which a minute description was given. The witness stated this person to have given

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an account of the use to which these pikes might be applied; that it was supposed no regiment of horse could stand against them; that such pikes were manufacturing at Sheffield; and that he had received from the Secretary of the Corresponding Society the direction of the person from whom he might procure them; that the price was to be one shilling apiece, and if they cost more, the overplus would be paid by a person at Sheffield, who would be indemnified by the Society. The witness also stated the same person to have given an account of a meeting intended to be held at a public house (which was named) on a day specified, for the purpose of fixing the number of pikes to be sent for. The person stated to have held this conversation, and another person said to have been present at it (who was also one of the most active members of the London Corresponding Society), were soon after apprehended, and a pike exactly answering to the description given by the witness was found upon each of them. In the subsequent investigation of the business, your Committee have received strong confirmation of the principal circumstances of the conversation stated by the witness, respecting the use to which the pikes might be applied, the direction given by the Secretary of the Corresponding Society in order to procure them from Sheffield, the price to be paid for them, and the intended meeting for the purpose of fixing the number to be sent for, and of depositing one shilling apiece for the purchase. One of the persons so apprehended, in explaining the use to be made of the pikes from Sheffield, said, the persuasion was, and he himself believed, the government were conspiring against the people, and therefore should be resisted. Another witness has since stated, that he had understood from one of the persons apprehended, that his pike was to be used (in case the people were to rise) for the particular purpose of keeping off the cavalry.

Your Committee, in the course of this examination, observed, that an account was given of some supposed meeting of Military Divisions, connected with the Corresponding Society, for the purpose of learning their exercise with musquets; and it was stated, that, with a view to instructing them, there had been printed and sold a copper-plate engraving of the manual exercise, accompanied with a book of directions on the subject. This engraving was afterwards produced, and it was proved to have been bespoke by one person, and engraved by another, whose names were mentioned, both of whom were members of the London Corresponding Society, and one of them a Secretary to one of the divisions, and to have been sold by another member of the Society to several members at a meeting of one of the divisions. A more particular account was afterwards given of a body formed for the purpose of exercising with fire-arms, which had taken the name of The Loyal Lambeth Association, but which had held no communication with Government, nor received any authority for that purpose. It appears, that although this armed society bore the name of The Loyal Lambeth Association, none of the members belonging to it were of the parish of Lambeth, excepting the original proposer of the Association,

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who was a member of the London Corresponding Society. The admission of persons who were afterwards members of the Association was objected to at first, because they did not belong to the London Corresponding Society; but on promise that they would become members of the London Corresponding Society, they were admitted into this armed Association. A gun engraver, who is also a member of the London Corresponding Society, and who furnished this Association with musquets, was first introduced to the person who set on foot the Association, by the Secretary of the Corresponding Society. This Association was regularly trained and exercised in the use of fire-arms twice a week. It has been given in evidence, that this Association removed from the house of a tradesman in the Borough, where they used to exercise, because they made so much noise with the arms that the workmen must know what they were about, the tradesman having different workmen, who might not be all of the same principle. Upon this suggestion, a committee was appointed to chuse proper places for exercise, where the Association might not be liable to be interrupted by the officers of police; and two places named to your Committee were appointed accordingly, to which the Association adjourned in two separate divisions. At one of these places they exercised in a room on the second floor, and with the window curtains drawn; and on some occasions, at another place, by candle-light, from eight to ten o'clock at night, with the shutters barred up. At the place where the Lambeth Association met, there was a printed ticket of admission with the following inscription engraved on it, '*Liberty to those who dare defend it.*' The object of all the persons who attended the Association (as was collected from their conversation) was universal suffrage and annual election. If they could not obtain a reform in Parliament in any other way, they meant to have recourse to arms. The Committee have traced eighteen stand of arms actually purchased by this Association. This number, purchased by persons apparently in very indigent circumstances, is a sufficient proof of their earnestness in the design in which they had engaged. But it further appears, that the same person who supplied this number, had engaged to furnish arms as the numbers who desired to have them increased; and that sixty musquets had been mentioned as likely to be wanted for this Association. It also appears to your Committee, that other institutions of the same nature existed, and that subscriptions had been opened for the purpose of providing musquets. In addition to the means already enumerated for gradually providing pikes and musquets, it has appeared in evidence, that one of the schemes in agitation was to seize the arms in the shops of the gunsmiths in London, and to distribute the arms, so seized, among the members of the London Corresponding Society. These proceedings in London, sufficiently important in themselves, become still more deserving of serious consideration, when combined with measures of a similar description taken at Sheffield, and in several parts of Scotland, and which not only coincide in point of time, but bear the strongest marks of deliberate concert

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and connexion with the attempts in London, to which your Committee have already directed the attention of the House. Your Committee have already inserted in this Report a letter from a person at Sheffield, found in the possession of the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society, and inclosing a direction to another person at Sheffield, who was to forward to the maker of the pikes all such orders as he might receive from London for that purpose.

It has appeared, from the concurring testimony of several persons examined before the Privy Council, that this direction was actually given by the Secretary of the Corresponding Society to one of its members; that many persons were desirous of procuring pikes; and that subscriptions had been already entered into, with the view of procuring them from Sheffield. One of the other persons apprehended at Sheffield, who had been Secretary to the Constitutional Society there, and upon whom a pike was found, acknowledged that he had seen the letter to the Secretary of the Corresponding Society in London, containing the inclosure for Norwich; and that the writer told him he had inclosed the letter for Norwich in the other for fear of suspicion: The same person also said, he could not doubt in the least that the pikes were to be furnished to London, according to the contents of the letter which had been explained to him at Sheffield. It appears that, some time in March last, a person calling himself Yorke, a member of the Constitutional Society at London, and who was chosen by them as one of their Delegates to the Convention at Edinburgh, recommended it to the people of Sheffield to take arms, representing it as a matter of right, founded on the Bill of Rights, and observing that the opposite party was arming, and therefore that the other party should be armed also; that Yorke used these recommendations both in private and public; told them in conversation, just after the meeting at Sheffield, where he had been Chairman, that pikes were used in France; and recommended to the people to get arms, according to an advertisement published at Sheffield, saying that it was legal and constitutional; and that they ought to get pikes as in France. This measure of arming was approved of by the greater part of the Society at Sheffield, which appears from information before your Committee to be very, numerous, and to have been subdivided into 45 or 50 small bodies, or different Clubs. In consequence of these recommendations, pikes were made at Sheffield under Yorke's orders, and the form and size were regulated by his particular direction. Your Committee think it of importance to call the attention of the House to this circumstance, as they shall have occasion to advert more particularly, in a subsequent part of this Report, to the principles and views publicly avowed by Yorke at a meeting held at Sheffield on the 7th of April last. Four persons are stated to have been employed in the manufacture of these pikes, and one of these persons to have worked at them for some weeks past; and it appears that several have been already made and sold to different persons at Sheffield, at the price of 2s. 6d. apiece: The pike taken upon one of the persons apprehended

at Sheffield answers precisely to the description given in the letter before inserted. In addition to this account of the measures taken for providing pikes, it must be observed, that the three persons apprehended at Sheffield concur in declaring, that they had seen there a pattern of an instrument, which has, on different occasions, been used in military operations for impeding the approach of cavalry, and which was stated by the witnesses to be intended to be laid in the road at night for that purpose. One of them said that he had no doubt that this instrument was formed with the same intention as the pikes, to defend the meeting at Sheffield against the military. It was also stated, that about the time when these arms were prepared, they had resolved at Sheffield (as will appear more particularly in the sequel of the Report) that no further petition should be made to Parliament on the subject of reform, although they intended to go on in their demands; and one of the persons examined said, if any meetings were to be held at Sheffield for the purpose of obtaining universal suffrage, and any attempt made to disturb such meeting, he thought the people would be justified in resistance.

While your Committee were employed in investigating the origin and progress of the plan for arming the people in London and at Sheffield, they received intelligence of the existence of similar designs in Scotland, which appear to have been in a much greater degree of forwardness, and to have been conducted with such secrecy that they might have produced the most serious consequences, if accident had not led to a timely discovery of their nature and extent before they had been carried into execution. This intelligence was communicated to your Committee in several letters from Mr. Secretary Dundas, which contain so full a narrative of the circumstances leading to the discovery of this design, of the scope and nature of the design itself, of the principles with which it was connected, and of the means by which it was to have been accomplished, that your Committee have thought they could not lay this important matter before the House in a more satisfactory manner than by inserting the letters at large in this place. It is however to be observed, that, besides what relates immediately to this particular head, these letters contain matters applying to other important branches of the subject of this Report; and to which it will be necessary hereafter to refer; and that many of the important circumstances detailed in Mr. Dundas's letters have been also communicated to your Committee through other channels.

‘ SIR,

Whitehall, 19th May 1794.

‘ I have received this morning, from the Sheriff Depute of the county of Edinburgh, authentic information of an accidental discovery made on the 15th and 16th ultimo, the general report of which I feel it proper to state to you, as it seems materially connected with the inquiry in which the Secret Committee of the House of Commons is now engaged.

‘ The

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' The creditors of a bankrupt having received information that part of his goods had been embezzled, and were secreted in the house of an individual, the usual warrant was issued, authorizing a search to be made in the suspected place; and in carrying it into execution, on the afternoon of the 15th, the officers discovered in a private place, where they appeared to have been concealed, twelve pike or spear heads. The proprietor of the house, who happened to be from home at the time, was soon thereafter taken into custody, and on being carried before the proper magistrate for examination, refused to give any account of these weapons, to whom they belonged, or for what purposes they were intended. On a more narrow search, there was likewise discovered, in a private and concealed part of the house, two other pike or spear heads, similar to the others, two battle-axes, and a shaft or pole, with a screw on the end, fitted for receiving either the spear head or battle-axe.

' Immediate inquiry being made after the persons with whom this individual had lately been seen in company, and two blacksmiths being mentioned among them, their houses and shops were immediately searched; one of the two was also taken into custody; the other escaped and absconded.—In the shop of the first of these men were found four pike or spear heads, finished, fitted with screws and sockets, and ready to be fixed on shafts; eight battle-axes, also fitted and finished; and twenty blades more not quite finished, but nearly so.

' In the shop and dwelling-house of the other, who had absconded, no such weapons were found; but the apprentices, on being examined before a magistrate, acknowledged that the pike or spear heads first discovered had been privately manufactured in their master's shop during the course of this fortnight past, and carried privately to his house as soon as completed.

' The battle-axes and blades appear also to have been manufactured within this fortnight past; and were intended, as the maker of them said, for the purpose of arming the people, should an invasion take place. But it appears, that to his apprentices, whom he had employed in assisting him to make them, he pretended they were meant for a gate; an account obviously false, as he could not point out any gate for which these weapons were intended, nor name any person who had ordered him to frame a gate of so particular a construction.

' These circumstances have induced the magistrates to commit all the persons concerned, for examination; and the result of the inquiries which are at present carrying forward, I expect will be regularly communicated to me.—It is proper also to inform you, that all the persons chiefly concerned appear to have been members of the British Convention which met at Edinburgh last winter; and since the dispersion of it have continued the most active and leading persons in the Societies

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' whose delegates composed the principal part of that meeting,
' who appear at present taking measures for calling another Con-
' vention of the same nature, which they expected is to take
' place soon in England; and some of whom have acknowledged
' that the propriety of the individuals composing these Societies
' arming themselves with spears and pikes has, within these few
' weeks past, been the subject of conversation amongst them,
' and steps taken for carrying that purpose into execution with
' caution and secrecy.

' The silence of one of the persons, the inconsistent and con-
' tradictory account of the other, and the flight of the third,
' throw a very strong suspicion on the purposes and intentions of
' the parties concerned in this transaction. The Sheriff is, in
' the course of his duty, proceeding to investigate the matter
' more accurately: But I consider it necessary and proper to
' communicate through you to the Committee information so
' intimately connected with the object of its inquiries, however
' imperfect that information still is, but which I have no doubt
' will soon be completed.

' I am,

' S I R,

' Your most obedient

' Humble Servant,

' Right Hon. Mr. Pitt.'

' HENRY DUNDAS.'

' SIR,

Whitehall, 23d May 1794.

' I have received this morning farther accounts from the
' Sheriff Depute of Edinburgh, of the transactions stated in my
' last letter; and the result of the inquiries since made by that
' magistrate, and which are still going forward, appear to me of
' such a nature as to deserve the particular attention of the Se-
' cret Committee.

' One of the individuals mentioned in my former letter has
' since made a disclosure, and a person since taken into custody,
' and who appears to have been privy to the whole transaction,
' has confessed, that these weapons were the first of a very large
' number and quantity, actually ordered to be made, and in-
' tended to be privately dispersed among the members of the va-
' rious Societies throughout Scotland, styling themselves Friends
' of the People, and who appear to be at present employed in
' taking measures for calling together another British Convention
' of Delegates to be held in England. An order has been given
' from one town alone in Scotland, for a large quantity of
' weapons of the nature described; no less a number than 4000
' has been mentioned, and more are intended to be distributed in
' Edinburgh. Emissaries appear also to have been dispatched,
' within this fortnight or three weeks past, to the manufacturing
' towns in the west of Scotland, for the purpose of sounding the
' inclinations of such of the inhabitants there who are known to
' be members of these Societies; and there is reason to believe,
' from

from information received from various different quarters, that these persons have by no means been unsuccessful.

Paisley is in particular alluded to as being in a state of great readiness; and there has been positive information received through other channels, that within these three weeks persons of that description have assembled themselves to a very considerable number in the night time, for the purpose of practising the use of arms. The particulars of this information, and the extent to which these meetings have proceeded, are at present matter of inquiry with the proper magistrates of the place; but the result has not yet been received.

The formation of this plan is now traced home to certain persons, some of whom are in custody, who appear to be entrusted by these Societies in Scotland with the most unlimited powers in directing their future proceedings—carrying on their correspondence—and who act as a Committee of Secrecy, consisting of a certain number of persons, the principal and most active members of the British Convention. The chusing of delegates to the expected Convention in England, the place of whose meeting is not yet divulged, and the raising of contributions among the various Societies throughout Scotland for defraying the charges of such delegates, appear to be the material part of their present employment, and in which it would seem they had made some progress. And it is the same Committee who have, for these some weeks past, been consulting and taking measures for arming themselves, and the members of the various clubs, with pikes and battle-axes, and who have employed the persons above mentioned in manufacturing them. The scheme appears to have been first proposed and agreed upon about a month ago; to have been since carried on with the utmost secrecy and caution; and the weapons, so far as has yet been discovered, manufactured by such persons, in such small quantities, in such circumstances, and under such pretences, as not to render the progress of the work probably liable to suspicion or detection; and it was brought to light by the very accidental and singular incident which I mentioned in my former letter.

I have the satisfaction of observing, that the magistrates and officers of the law in Scotland have been, and still continue, active in the searches and inquiries making at the different suspected places within their respective jurisdictions. In Perth and Dundee nothing has been discovered which can lead me to believe that measures have been taken in either of these places for making arms, the manufacture of which seems to have been confined to Edinburgh, and intended to have been gradually dispersed from thence to such places as required them. No such weapons have been discovered at Paisley or in its neighbourhood; though the intention of arming, and holding regular nightly meetings, are perfectly ascertained.

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‘ Information has also been communicated, of the authenticity of which there is no room to doubt, that a conspiracy has been formed, as soon as a proper number of these weapons were distributed among the Friends of the People in Edinburgh, to seize in the night the persons of the principal magistrates, and officers of the law; the banks, the public offices, guards, and prison; and after inticing the soldiery from the castle, by kindling a fire in the middle of the city, to intercept them on their return, by means of different armed parties to be properly stationed for that purpose.

‘ It appears likewise, from indisputable facts, that the most secret and artful means have been and are still using with the Fencible Regiments in Scotland, to excite them to disobedience and mutiny. The printed paper * which I herewith transmit has been industriously circulated for that purpose.

‘ I have the honour to be,

‘ SIR,

‘ Your most obedient

‘ Humble servant,

‘ HENRY DUNDAS.’

‘ Right Hon. Mr. Pitt.’

‘ SIR,

Whitehall, 24th May 1794.

‘ I have received no further accounts of the result of the inquiries going on in Edinburgh; but I am sorry to state that I have received information from the sheriff of the county of Renfrew, confirmed by letters received from other respectable persons in Paisley, that the magistrates of that place having, in the course of their inquiries, committed on the afternoon of the 19th a man to custody for further examination, a considerable number of persons (several hundreds) assembled in the evening, and after choosing a President, whom they addressed by the title of Citizen President, voted a number of resolutions to the following purpose: That a National Convention should be immediately called, to which they would send delegates— That they should not petition Parliament, as it was to themselves alone, and to such Convention, they could look for redress. They then proceeded to consider the conduct of the sheriff and magistrates in committing their brother citizen, as he was termed; and, after much discussion as to the propriety of immediately releasing him by force, the majority seemed inclined to take mild measures first, and to send a deputation to ask his release. But the magistrates having received information of what was intended, and dismissed the man from custody, the mob dispersed with three cheers, having been previously instructed by their President to abstain from further tumult, and to observe a peaceable and orderly conduct.

‘ The authority of the civil magistrate is in the mean time entirely superseded; and until a proper force is sent to protect them in the future execution of their duty, which has been anxiously required by the sheriff and magistrates, they dare not proceed in the common course of legal and judicial inquiry against any of the persons who are suspected of being concerned in these violent and tumultuary proceedings. But it cannot escape the observation of the Committee, how accurately this intelligence corresponds with and confirms the information yesterday communicated, as to the state of the minds of these people in that neighbourhood; the alarm which their leaders feel as to the result of the legal inquiries at present depending; and the regular systematic connection between them and the leaders at Edinburgh, as discovered from the yet unfinished and hasty examinations taken in that city.

‘ I have the honour to be,

‘ SIR,

‘ Your most obedient humble servant,

‘ HENRY DUNDAS.’

‘ Right Hon. Mr. Pitt.’

‘ SIR,

Whitehall, 27th May 1794.

‘ I have this morning received farther information from Scotland, which appears to me proper to be communicated to the Committee.

‘ The persons in whose custody the weapons, formerly described, were found, appear to have acted for some time past under the name of a Committee of Ways and Means appointed by the British Convention, and to have been empowered by the various Societies throughout Scotland to direct all their future proceedings.—By means of emissaries privately dispatched to different parts of the country, this Committee has signified to, and prepared a number of the Societies for the approaching Convention in England, many of whom have chosen, and all, as far as is yet known, agreed to choose delegates to attend it, and subscribe for their expences.—The time and place of meeting was not divulged, and were to be communicated from Edinburgh in proper time, by individuals to be sent from thence for that purpose, whose arrival was daily looked for by several of the different Societies.—One of the members of the late Convention at Edinburgh appears within this fortnight past to have been dispatched, and to have actually performed an extensive tour through the west part of Scotland, to have visited in his progress the towns of Queensferry, Falkirk, Stirling, St. Ninians, Kelsyth, Kirkintulloch, Campsie, Glasgow, and Paisley; in all of which places he appears to have met with the principal persons concerned in these Societies; to have left with them, and the members of the Societies, copies of a circular letter from the Committee of Edinburgh, and instructed them in what manner they were in future to

‘ carry

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' carry on their correspondence; and to have suggested to them
' the propriety of furnishing themselves with arms, for the pur-
' poses of defence, under the pretence of defending themselves
' against foreign troops. An attempt has been made to distri-
' bute some of the weapons lately discovered at Edinburgh *, by
' means of persons privately dispatched to the country for that
' purpose; and which seems only to have failed in its execution
' from the timidity of the person solicited to do so.

' An individual of the same description has been taken into
' custody in the country, who appears to have commissioned,
' and actually received from England, some muskets and bayo-
' nets. On being questioned by the proper magistrate, he has
' refused giving any explanation, farther than that he commis-
' sioned them in the way of his business—But it does not appear
' that he ever dealt in such articles before; no person appears to
' have commissioned him to procure any such; and there seems
' to be full evidence of his having solicited others to purchase
' what they of themselves were not thinking of, or wishing to
' provide.

' He admits having corresponded with the London Corre-
' sponding Society on the subject of a Convention, and that the
' Society of which he is a leader had agreed to send delegates to
' it, as soon as the time and place of meeting should be di-
' vulged.

' A requisition has been made by the magistrates and principal
' inhabitants of Paisley, for a military force to protect them in
' the execution of their duty, and in their persons and properties;
' which has been duly attended to. It is with much satisfaction
' I inform you, that the gentlemen of estate and character, in
' the county of Renfrew, have voluntarily stepped forward, and
' determined to support the authority of the civil magistrate.

' I have the honour to be,

' SIR,

' Your most obedient

' Humble servant,

' HENRY DUNDAS.'

' Right Hon. Mr. Pitt.'

' SIR,

Whitehall, 2d June 1794.

' The information I have received this morning from Edin-
' burgh enables me to state to the Committee that the transac-
' tions communicated in my former letters are farther cleared up
' by the inquiries which have since taken place in that city.

' Some of the persons who absconded on the first discovery of
' the arms concealed in certain houses have been discovered and
' apprehended; and the result of these farther inquiries confirms, in
' almost every particular, the account received from other quarters,
' and the import of which I have already laid before the Com-

* Vide Appendix A. (No. 2.)

mittee. The establishment of a Secret Committee at Edinburgh, invested with full powers to direct the future operations of the Societies throughout Scotland; the regular correspondence privately carried on by means of emissaries dispatched to the different towns; the ascertaining the exact number of persons in these Societies, who were directed to provide themselves with arms, and to hold themselves in readiness for any measure which the Secret Committee might in due time communicate; are confirmed by every account and information which the magistrates have received. And an individual who has been lately taken into custody has confirmed the account received from a different quarter, of the dangerous design planned by the Edinburgh Committee, of effecting a general insurrection as soon as they were ready and prepared for carrying it into execution, by the seizure of the principal magistrates and officers of the law at midnight, and possessing themselves of the prisons and public offices, as stated to you in my letter of the 23d May, and then communicated through a different channel from that through which the present confirmation of these circumstances has been received. The plan seems not only to have been discussed and deliberated on by the ringleaders at Edinburgh, but to have proceeded a certain degree in its steps towards actual execution, which appear to have been conducted with the utmost caution; and there is reason to believe, that the execution of the plan was not to be confined to Edinburgh, but was meant to take place in some of the most considerable towns in Scotland on a certain day, and at one and the same time. The proper and usual steps have been taken for bringing the offenders to trial; and those against whom the information chiefly points are detained in custody.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient,

Humble servant,

HENRY DUNDAS.

Right Hon. Mr. Pitt.

From what has been stated it appears, that the design of arming, as far as it has yet proceeded, has been conducted with great secrecy and caution, and at the same time with a remarkable degree of uniformity and concert in parts of the kingdom remote from each other. The weapons principally provided seem to have been peculiarly calculated for the purposes of sudden violence, and to have been chosen in conformity to the example of what has recently passed in France. The actual progress made in the execution of the design, during the short period of a few weeks, sufficiently shows what might have been expected, if the Societies had proceeded, without interruption, in increasing the number of their members, and the fund for providing arms.

YOUR

YOUR COMMITTEE will next proceed to lay before the House an account of various remarkable circumstances, which have appeared in the course of this investigation, and which furnish striking instances, either of the general principles on which the chief promoters of this plan have acted, or of specific measures which they had in contemplation, and which, from their nature and importance, deserve to be particularly noticed.

The general disposition of the persons engaged in these measures, to applaud and promote the new political principles adopted in France, has been stated in the former Report, and will be more detailed in the sequel: But it seems proper to your Committee here to mention some of the letters of two of the most active members of the Corresponding Society, which show their adherence to the cause of France in the present war; their conviction of the connexion between that cause and their own objects; and their views even of availing themselves, if possible, of the assistance of the French arms in carrying their designs into execution.

In a letter from Hardy to the United Societies at Norwich, dated the 17th October 1793, which is inserted in the Appendix *, there is this remarkable passage—‘ The rejoicings for the capture of Valenciennes were not confined to Norwich alone. The ignorant every-where else throughout the nation betrayed their imbecility on the occasion; but *the taking of a town*; the slaughtering of thousands of human beings; the laying waste whole provinces, or the enslaving a nation (*however great evils they may be*), can only, for a small space of time, retard the progress of truth and reason: *Be not disheartened, therefore*, pursue your plan, instruct mankind, and constitutionally set your faces against exiling abuses: Be assured that many are our friends, who only wait a favourable opportunity openly to join us, while our enemies have much enfeebled themselves and their cause by arbitrary exertions: Despotism is at its last gasp; one or two campaigns more will terminate its existence.’ And in a subsequent letter † from Margarot to the United Societies at Norwich, dated in March last, the sentiments expressed are still more striking:—‘ This morning ten ships of war have left Spithead for the Channel, and it is reported that the Brest fleet is out. Rumour, always manifesting things, says, there are seventy sail of the French at sea; if so, *there must be a number of transports among them, and a DESCENT MAY PROBABLY BE THE CONSEQUENCE. For God’s sake, my worthy friends, do not relax in the cause of freedom—Continue as you have begun;—consolidate your own Societies;—unite with others;—persevere, and make no doubt but sooner or later your endeavours will be crowned with success.*’ At the time of writing this last letter, Margarot was no longer in a situation to take a part in the proceedings of the Society, being then on board the vessel in which he was to be transported. But it appears to your Commit-

* Appendix B. (No. 1.)

† Appendix B. (No. 3.)

tee, that these expressions from him are of no small importance, considering the share which he appears, by much concurrent evidence, to have had, previous to his conviction, in directing the measures which were adopted; the uniform approbation and attachment which those Societies have shown him since that date; and above all, that these very sentiments are addressed to the United Societies at Norwich, and that the mention of an expected descent from France is immediately followed by an exhortation to them to proceed, with fresh vigour, in the pursuit of their designs in this country.

The same spirit appears in a letter from the Secretary of the Corresponding Society * in the month of January 1794: *'Now is the time for us to do something worthy of men; the brave defenders of liberty south of the English Channel are performing wonders, driving their enemies before them like chaff before the whirlwind.'*

Your Committee place less reliance on accounts of words used in conversation than on evidence resulting from written documents; but they nevertheless think it proper to mention, that it has been distinctly stated in evidence, that, in the presence of two or three principal members of the Corresponding Society, a person (whose name was mentioned) used the expression, speaking of the French, *that a victory of theirs in Flanders was as useful to the cause as a victory in St. George's Fields*; and the same person appears to have held a conversation with these members of the Society, relative to the advantage which would be derived if the French could land 5000 men in this country, to join those who should rise here.

Another leading circumstance has appeared to your Committee, which, however ineffectual it has naturally proved, furnishes a strong collateral proof of the extent of the views entertained, and that no means, however criminal, were neglected for promoting them. The circumstance referred to, is a design, which has been the frequent subject of conversation among some members of the Corresponding Society, of endeavouring to seduce the army from their duty, and the actual employment of emissaries to tamper with the soldiers. In conformity with these views, it also has appeared, that it was intended to prepare an address to the army; and a paper has been discovered in Scotland, which has been already referred to, the object of which was to endeavour to excite disaffection in the Fencible Regiments in that part of the kingdom, and which has actually been circulated with much industry among the soldiers of that description.

Various other schemes of the most daring and criminal nature are also stated, on the evidence of persons, who were present, to have been at different times the subject of conversation among persons, the greatest part of whom were members of this Society. It even appears, that a project has been particularly and repeatedly agitated among them, of striking a sudden blow, and beginning by securing the Royal Family, and the Members of both Houses of

* Appendix B. (No. 2.)

Parliament, with the hope (as it was expressed) ' that the army, ' being without leaders, would no longer oppose their attempts.' Particular individuals have been pointed out in these conversations, as objects of personal vengeance for their public conduct. Evidence has been given of discourses held concerning the rescue of the delegates of the Scotch Convention, while on board the transport in the river. An attack on Newgate was meditated, according to a particular plan referred to in the conversation, with the view of releasing the prisoners. A similar conversation was held with respect to an attack on the Tower; and from the letter to the Secretary of State, which has been inserted in a former part of the Report, it appears that there is direct evidence of a plan regularly concerted at Edinburgh, for seizing, at an appointed time, all the public offices in that city, the banks, and the principal members of the courts of justice; and for making a similar attempt (in consequence of a secret concert among the members of the Societies in different places) at one and the same time, in some of the most considerable towns in Scotland.

Your Committee do not state the various circumstances which have been enumerated in this part of the Report, as showing that these extensive projects, as far as relates to England, were as yet regularly digested, or in sufficient forwardness for actual execution; but the evidence before them gives them every reason to believe that these views have been deliberately entertained, and made the repeated subject of conversation; and they cannot but consider them as strong indications of the principles and intentions of the parties concerned, and of the nature of the measures which might have been expected if they had proceeded, without interruption, in increasing their numbers, and in providing arms in the different modes already stated.

There remains another circumstance which, however, as far as it has yet been investigated, is traced distinctly only to two individuals, both of whom were members of the Corresponding Society, and principally concerned in some of their most remarkable transactions: Whether any other members of the Society were or were not acquainted with it, has not appeared to your Committee. Three copies have been produced to your Committee (in all material parts conformable to each other) of a paper which purports to be a draft of resolutions intended to be proposed at the meeting which took place at Chalk Farm on the 14th of April 1794. From the blank left for the place of meeting, it seems probable that it was prepared before that place was fixed upon: The resolutions are different from those which passed at the meeting, and there is no reason to believe that they were in fact proposed there; but distinct evidence has been given of the hand-writing being that of the person in whose possession one of the copies was found, who is also proved to have shown them as the resolutions which he intended should be proposed at the meeting; and the two other copies were found among the papers of one of the most active members of the Society, who appears, previous to the meeting at Chalk-Farm, to have been ap-
pointed

pointed, in conjunction with some others, to arrange the measures to be adopted, and at whose suggestion (subsequent to that appointment) the meeting is stated to have been postponed beyond the time originally proposed, because (as he is said to have represented) more time was necessary to make known the sentiments of the Society in bold and nervous resolutions. Your Committee think it right here to insert the paper itself, on which they will forbear to make any comment.

' At a General Meeting of the London Corresponding Society,
' held at on Monday, the 14th day of April
' 1794.

' Citizen ——— in the Chair,

' Resolved, That all sovereign, legislative, and judicial powers
' are the rights of the people; and though the people have dele-
' gated those their original powers to others, in *trust*, for the
' benefit of the community, yet the rights themselves are reserv-
' ed by the people, and cannot be absolutely parted with by the
' people, to those persons who are employed to conduct the busi-
' ness of the state.

' Resolved, That the Constitution of England is held by the
' King, Lords, and Commons, and other officers appointed by
' the people, in *trust*, for the benefit of the people; and though
' these trustees may regulate and improve the Constitution, yet
' they cannot alter or subvert it without committing treason
' against the nation.

' Resolved, That *Magna Charta*, or THE GREAT CHAR-
' TER OF THE LIBERTIES OF ENGLAND, made in
' the reign of King John; THE PETITION OF RIGHTS,
' assented to by Parliament in the reign of King Charles I. and
' the several laws made at and in consequence of the *Glorious*
' *Revolution* in the year 1688, are declaratory of those parts of the
' Constitution of England, which are in and by them respectively
' declared.

' Resolved, That the office of KING of England was not in-
' stituted by the people merely as an office of profit and honour
' to the King, but he was so appointed as chief trustee and guar-
' dian of the Constitution and rights of the people; and that im-
' portant and laborious personal duties are annexed to the regal
' office, the objects of which are, to promote the good of the
' people, and preserve their rights in full vigour from innovation
' and corruption.

' Resolved, That it is the duty of the King to preserve the
' Constitution of England and the rights of the people against
' every incroachment; and in order to enforce that duty, the
' following oath is required to be taken by every king on his ac-
' cession to the throne of Great Britain, to wit: The Archbishop
' or Bishop shall say—' Will you solemnly promise and swear to
' govern the people of this kingdom of England, and the do-

'minions thereto belonging, according to the statutes in Parliament agreed on, and the laws and customs of the same?'

'The King or Queen shall say, 'I solemnly promise so to do.' Archbishop or Bishop—'Will you to your power cause law and justice in mercy to be executed in all your judgments?'

ANS. 'I will.'

'After this, the King or Queen, laying his or her hand on the Holy Gospels, shall say—'The things which I have before promised, I will perform and keep; So help me God'—and then shall kiss the book.

'Resolved, That his present Majesty-King George the Third, on his accession to the throne of these realms, did solemnly take the said oath.

'Resolved, That the constitutional rights of the people have been violated, and that it is the duty of the people, in the present alarming crisis, to assemble and enquire into the innovations or infringements which have been made upon the rights of the people, and how far the declarations of the constitution, as they were settled at the aforesaid Revolution, remain in force, and which of them have been violated, and by whom; and also whether such innovations, infringements, and violations, have been committed from the negligence or corruption of those who have been intrusted with the government of the State.

'Resolved, That this Society do invite the people to meet in their respective neighbourhoods, to elect one or more person or persons as delegates to meet in a Convention, to be held on the day of next, at such place as shall be appointed by the Secret Committee of this Society; and that the delegates so elected do forthwith transmit to the Secretary of this Society, No. 9, Piccadilly, London, the vouchers of their several elections, in order that the place of meeting may be duly notified to them.

'Resolved, That it is the right and the bounden duty of the people to punish all traitors against the nation, and that the following words are now not a part of the oath of allegiance; to wit, 'I declare that it is not lawful, upon any pretence whatever, to take arms against the King.'

Before the Committee quit this part of the subject, they think it not immaterial to take some notice of the different means used to disseminate such principles as have been stated through the lower orders of society, and to familiarize their minds, by every possible artifice, to such ideas as might prepare them to be the instruments of the most dangerous and desperate designs. Some of these means may at first sight be considered as too trivial to be mentioned on an occasion of this importance; but they appear to your Committee in a very different light, when they recollect that an essential part of such a plan as has been in agitation was to seduce and corrupt the thoughtless and uninformed, and to make use of the channels of communication best adapted to this purpose. The appearance of

insignifi-

insignificance and levity, which belongs at first sight to this part of the system, is, in truth, only an additional proof of the art and industry with which it has been pursued. The measures employed for this purpose appear to have been deliberately prepared, and every contrivance used, to mix them (in the shape most likely to captivate attention) with the ordinary occupations or amusements of those on whom they were intended to operate. Accordingly lectures have been delivered on political subjects, calculated from their very extravagance to catch the attention of the audience, and in the course of them every topic has been employed that could inflame their minds, alienate them from the laws and constitution of their country, and habituate them to principles of sedition and rebellion. The most violent publications to the same effect have been secretly, but generally, circulated in hand-bills, both in the metropolis and in the remote parts of the country. Every point that could excite discontent, according to the pursuits, interests, or prejudices of different classes, has been successively dwelt on, and always in such a manner as to connect it with the leading design. The attempt to accomplish this end has appeared in the shape even of play-bills and songs; seditious toasts; and a studied selection of the tunes which have been most in use in France since the Revolution, have been applied to the same purpose, of endeavouring to render deliberate incitements to every species of treason familiar to the minds of the people.

HAVING thus stated the points which the Committee have thought it material separately to lay before the House, they will now proceed to those particulars which will give a full and distinct view of the rise, progress, and nature of the general design with which the facts already stated are essentially connected; for this purpose your Committee will state in their Report the points which appear most worthy of attention, inserting in the Appendix a more particular statement of the several proceedings to which they refer. In doing this it will be necessary to advert to transactions, some of which took place at an early period, and have already attracted observation; but which it is nevertheless material to insert in the order in which they took place, because they are highly important in explaining more recent proceedings, and giving a connected view of the whole system.

The period from which it appears to your Committee material to trace in this view the proceedings of the Society for Constitutional Information, is that of the publication of the pamphlet so well known under the title of 'Rights of Man, by Thomas Paine.'

Your Committee have already referred, in their former Report, to the approbation given by the Society to this work; and this is one of the points on which they should not think it necessary now to dwell, if they did not feel it essential to the object before stated, of developing the rise and progress of the system which they are tracing, to call the attention of the House to the leading features of a work thus approved and recommended, in order to compare it with

with subsequent transactions of which it may be considered as the foundation.

In this pamphlet, published in the year 1791, the National Assembly of France was represented as occupied in establishing a constitution founded on the rights of man, and the authority of the people, the only authority on which [it was stated] government had a right to exist in any country; *Monarchy and Hereditary Succession* were treated as absurdities; the *Revolution of 1688*, and the *succession of the House of Hanover*, were also made the subject of ridicule; and a distinction was drawn between two modes of government, which were stated to prevail in the world: First, government by election and representation; and, secondly, government by hereditary succession: The former generally known by the name of Republic, the latter by that of Monarchy and Aristocracy. On the 23d of March 1791, the Society resolved, 'That the thanks of the Society should be given to Mr. Thomas Paine, in the terms expressed in the copy of their resolution of this day,' inserted in the Appendix*. A continuation of Paine's book, intitled 'Rights of Man, Part the Second, combining Principle and Practice,' was published early in 1792, in which the principles of the British constitution were again attacked; the principles on which the French constitution, accepted by the King in 1791, had been established, were approved, with an exception of the *hereditary succession to the Crown*: This pamphlet, recommending the overthrow of the British constitution, and the establishment of a democratical senate, as the sole legislative and executive power of the State, was also circulated with great industry; and the Society for Constitutional Information, on the 16th of March 1792 †, expressed their approbation of the work, in answer to a letter from the Manchester Constitutional Society, containing the thanks of that Society to Mr. Paine. On the 23d of March 1792 ‡, the Constitutional Society at Sheffield applied to the London Society, that twelve of their members might be admitted as associated members of the London Society; and there appears in the books of the London Society, a printed paper of the Sheffield Society, in which that Society declares, that the practice as well as the principle of government was laid down in the works intitled, 'Rights of Man, Part the First and Second,' in a manner *so clear and irresistibly convincing*, that the Society resolved to give their thanks to Mr. Paine for those publications.

Other entries, expressive of approbation of the same works, and of other seditious publications, frequently appear in the same books during the course of the year 1792 §.

In Easter Term, 1792, an information was filed in the Court of King's Bench, by the King's Attorney General, against Thomas Paine, for writing and publishing the last pamphlet, on which he was convicted in December 1792. During this prosecution another pamphlet was published, under the title of 'An Address to the

* Appendix C. † Appendix C. ‡ Appendix C. § Appendix C.
'Addressers

'Addressers on the late Proclamation, by Thomas Paine.' This pamphlet, after stating that 'Two revolutions had taken place, those of America and France,' added, 'both of them have rejected the *unnatural compounded system of the English government*. 'America has declared against all hereditary government, and established the representative system of government only; France has entirely rejected the aristocratical part, and is now discovering the absurdity of the monarchical, and is approaching fast to the *representative system* *.' The pamphlet then treats Monarchy, and every species of hereditary government, as a fraud and imposition; asserts, 'for a nation to be free it is sufficient that she wills it †'; treats the Reform of Parliament by Parliament itself as absurd; denies the power of Parliament to reform any part of the constitution; asserts that it is not a subject cognizable before Parliament, and that the right, and the exercise of that right, appertains to the nation only, and that the proper means is by a *National Convention, elected for the purpose by all the people* ‡: That such a body, empowered and supported by the nation, would have authority to demand information upon all matters necessary to be inquired into, and the nation would decree its own reforms. The pamphlet then states § that the plan and organization of a Convention was easy in practice; and proceeds to show the manner in which, supposing the inhabitants of England to be seven millions, a Convention of 1000 members might be elected in an orderly manner; adding, that 'a Convention of 1000 persons, fairly elected, would bring every matter to a decided issue ||.' This latter pamphlet was not made the subject of any express resolutions of the Society; but during the prosecution of Mr. Paine for the former work, the Society for Constitutional Information entered into a subscription to defray his expenses ¶, and encouraged the like support from other Societies, as appears by several entries in the books of the Society. And this mark of their approbation of his principles having been continued after the publication last mentioned, seems to afford a full proof that this circumstance had made no change in the sentiments of the Society towards him.

The principles laid down in these publications appearing thus to be approved and sanctioned by the Society, will be found to be gradually and successively adopted and acted upon in their proceedings. On the 30th of March 1792 **, the London Corresponding Society sent to the Society for Constitutional Information several resolutions, among which were the following:

'That every individual has a right to share in the government of that society of which he is a member, unless incapacitated.

* P. 37.
|| P. 71.

† P. 51.
¶ Appendix C.

‡ P. 66.
§ P. 66, 67.
** Appendix C.

'That

'That nothing but non-age, a privation of reason, or an offence against the general rules of society, can incapacitate him.'

These resolutions, containing the principle of universal suffrage, were adopted without reserve, and with strong expressions of approbation, by the Constitutional Society.

On the 20th of April following, a declaration from a Society in Southwark * appears entered in the books of the Constitutional Society, with their thanks for the communication. This declaration expresses more fully the grounds on which the Societies intended to proceed, adopting many important principles which had been made the foundation of the French revolution, in the following terms:

- 'That all civil and political authority is derived from the people.
- 'That equal active citizenship is the unalienable right of all men, minors, criminals, and insane persons excepted.
- 'That the exercise of that right, in appointing an adequate representative government, is the wisest device of human policy, and the only security of national freedom.'

The resolutions of the Sheffield Society having suggested universal suffrage, and the Southwark Society having added the general idea of a *representative government*, a Society, called the Norwich Revolution Society, on the 26th of April 1792, sent a letter to the Constitutional Society, entered in the minutes of their proceedings on the 4th of May 1792 †, in which there is this passage: 'This Society is willing to hope the redress of every existing grievance at the hands of a government resulting from an extraordinary convocation in 1688, of all who had at any preceding time been elected representatives of the people, assisted by the hereditary counsellors of the nation, and a peculiar deputation from the metropolis, *which National Constituting Assembly* cashiered for misconduct a king of the house of Stuart.'

It seems evidently to be the intention of this passage to represent the Revolution of 1688 as a precedent for a *National Constituting Assembly*, and to shelter under that authority the indirect recommendation of the proceedings and terms which have recently been adopted in France.

This communication, with others from different Societies at Norwich, were followed by a resolution, expressing that the Society for Constitutional Information received them with *heart-felt satisfaction*, and desired earnestly to concur and co-operate with those Societies in their laudable objects.

They also elected twelve members of the Norwich Society associated members of their own Society.

* Appendix C.

† Appendix C.

§ Appendix C.

And

And they added a resolution, that a Committee should be appointed to consider whether any and what communication should be made, and by what means, by the Society, with the Society of Friends of the Constitution at Paris.

It appears by entries of the 11th of May 1792*, that 'The Society of Friends of the Constitution at Paris,' mentioned in the former resolution, were the Jacobin Club there; and on the same day it was resolved that there should be a communication with that club; and an address was read and agreed to, and ordered to be signed by the Chairman, and transmitted to Paris.

Towards the close of the same year, and some time subsequent to the revolution of the 10th of August, which finally destroyed all traces of monarchy in France, the Society resolved to address the National Convention, which was then invested with the whole legislative and executive government, and was assembled for the purpose of framing a new constitution, and proceeding to the trial of the King. This paper † is conceived in terms which leave no room to doubt of the views of those who framed it. The address styles the Convention—'*Servants of a sovereign people, and benefactors of mankind.*' It rejoices that the revolution in France had arrived at that point of perfection which enabled the Society to address the Convention by that title; and it declares that that is the only title that can accord with the character of true legislators: It speaks of the proceedings of the 10th of August as a glorious victory, which had finally prepared the way for a constitution, which the Society trusted the Convention would establish on the basis of reason and nature. It represents the proceedings of the Convention as labours in the work of human happiness, and adds, 'THE BENEFITS WILL IN PART BE OURS, but the glory will be all your own; and it is the reward of your perseverance; it is the prize of virtue.' Then, drawing a comparison between the state of liberty in England, America, and France, it not only gives a decided preference to the American republic over the British monarchy, but treats the splendour of the French revolution as the object of the highest admiration.

This address was ordered to be presented by two of the members of the Society at the bar of the National Convention; and it was presented accordingly.

But the terms of this address are not the only evidence on this head. An address ‡, framed a short time before by the London Corresponding Society, which had been communicated to the Constitutional Society, and had received their express approbation, and which was presented likewise to the French Convention, contained passages clearly expressing the same intent, and suggesting the idea of a triple alliance (not of crowns, but) of the people of America, France, and Britain, to give freedom to Europe, and peace to the whole world.

* Appendix C.

† Appendix C.

‡ Appendix C.

These transactions are rendered still more remarkable by the verbal address of the deputies at the time of presenting the address of the Society, and by the answer of the president, which they transmitted. The letters of the deputies to the Society have been found among the papers of that Society, together with a copy of the address of the deputies, and the answer of the president. In the first, after pointing out their wishes to effect in their own country a revolution similar to that made in France, the deputies consider the example of France as having made *revolutions easy*; and add, that it would not be extraordinary if, in a short space of time, the French should send addresses of congratulation to a *National Convention of England*; and the president, in his answer, says, 'The moment, without doubt, approaches, when the French will bring congratulations to the *National Convention of Great Britain*.'

On the 7th of December 1792, the letter of the deputies * was read in the Society, as appears by an entry in their books.

In January 1793, Barrere, Roland, and St. André, were elected (as has been mentioned in the former Report) honorary members of the Society †; and on the first of February, the speeches of Barrere and St. André were ordered to be entered on the books of the Society, and this resolution ordered to be printed in the news-papers, which it actually was on the 5th of February 1793.

The circumstance of the time at which this marked approbation was publicly given to leading members of the National Convention of France, would render this measure of itself a strong indication of the views of the Society, and as such it was referred to by the Committee in their former Report.

But on more particular reference to the speeches themselves, which were thus recommended to public notice, this transaction will be found to be of much more importance; it is not barely an approbation of leading persons professing principles, and pursuing measures, hostile to the general interests of the country: The speeches were delivered for the express purpose of accelerating the condemnation and execution of the French king. The doctrines contained in them directly relate to the precise object of a *National Convention*, and to the question of the personal responsibility of sovereigns; they contain a statement of the rights, duties, and functions of such an assembly; which cannot be supposed to have been recommended to the public attention for any other possible purpose than that of laying the foundation of a similar proceeding in this country, and that with the direct intention of employing it for the destruction of the sovereign, and the utter subversion of the constitution. This conclusion will be fully justified by an extract from the speeches in question, which are expressed in terms so remarkable, that the Committee cannot too strongly recommend them to the attention of the House.

The following passage is extracted from St. André's speech:

* Appendix C.

† Appendix C.

‘ Your

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‘ Your right to decide the fate of the King, arises from your
‘ being a revolutionary assembly, created by the nation in a state
‘ of insurrection.’

Barrere's speech is much more full, and more systematically reasoned; it is divided into several heads, from which the following extracts are taken :

‘ This proceeding (speaking of the trial of the King) is of the
‘ highest importance to public order, absolutely necessary to the
‘ existence of liberty, and connected with whatever is held most
‘ sacred by the nation. From the calmness and temper which
‘ have distinguished the deliberations of the Convention on this
‘ occasion, it may be foreseen that justice and reason will direct
‘ its ultimate sentence. History will record the striking contrast
‘ between kings, who in the midst of the dissipation of courts
‘ sign proscriptions and death warrants for the destruction of
‘ thousands of citizens, and the representatives of the people,
‘ who deliberate with wisdom and caution on the punishment of
‘ a single despot.

‘ It is the destiny of kings to be the occasion of the calamities
‘ of the people, whether they remain on their thrones, or whether
‘ they are precipitated from them.

‘ P A R T II.

‘ Whether the *Person of the King* be inviolable.

‘ The people of Paris, by making an holy insurrection against
‘ the King on the 10th of August, deprived him of his character
‘ of inviolability. The people of the other Departments ap-
‘ plauded this insurrection, and adopted the consequence of it.
‘ The people have therefore formally interposed to destroy this
‘ royal inviolability. The tacit consent of the people rendered
‘ the person of the King inviolable. The act of insurrection
‘ was a tacit repeal of that consent, and was founded on the
‘ same grounds of law as the consent itself. The King's person
‘ is inviolable only with relation to the other branches of the
‘ legislature, but not with relation to the people.’

‘ P A R T III.

‘ Whether an *Appeal shall be made to the People*?

‘ The people is the sovereign.

‘ A Convention differs from an ordinary legislature in this respect.
‘ A legislature is only a species of superintending magistracy, a
‘ moderator of the powers of government. A convention is a
‘ perfect representation of the sovereign. The members of the
‘ Legislative Assembly acted in August upon these principles. In
‘ summoning the Convention they declare, that they saw but
‘ one measure which could save France; namely, to have recourse

' to the supreme will of the people, and to invite the people to
 ' exercise immediately that inalienable right of sovereignty which
 ' the constitution had acknowledged, and which it could not
 ' subject to any restriction. The public interest required that
 ' the people should manifest their will, by the election of a
 ' National Convention, formed of representatives invested by the
 ' people with unlimited powers. The people did manifest their
 ' will, by the election of that Convention. The Convention
 ' being assembled, is itself that sovereign will which ought to
 ' prevail. It would be contrary to every principle, to suppose
 ' that the Convention is not alone exclusively the expression of
 ' the general will.

' The powers of the Convention must, from the very nature
 ' of the assembly, be unlimited with respect to every measure
 ' of general safety, such as the execution of a tyrant. It is
 ' no longer a Convention, if it has not power to judge the King.

' A Convention is a constituent body, *i. e.* a body that is to
 ' make a constitution for the people. A legislature makes laws
 ' under an established constitution, and in conformity to it. It is
 ' despotism when in the ordinary and permanent establishment of
 ' a state there is no separation of powers; but it is of the very
 ' essence of a constituent body to concentrate for the time all au-
 ' thority. It is the very nature of a National Convention to be
 ' the temporary image of the nation, to unite in itself all the
 ' powers of the state, to employ them against the enemies of
 ' liberty, and to distribute them in a new social compact called a
 ' Constitution.

' Behold that Constituent Assembly which laid the first found-
 ' ations of your liberty! Behold that revolutionary genius!
 ' which broke through every impediment, exceeded its delegated
 ' authority, created its own powers according to the exigencies
 ' of liberty, and to the occasional wants of the people, destroyed
 ' all prejudices by the force of that public opinion to which it
 ' gave birth, obliterated all privileges, abolished all the Parlia-
 ' ments, changed the form and tenure of all property, as well as
 ' the measure and sign of all value, and made a perjured King
 ' its prisoner! Nothing was wanting to immortalize that Assem-
 ' bly, but to have delivered France from the calamity of kingly
 ' government, and to have relieved you from the duty of judging
 ' the last of your Kings.

' With this example before your eyes, you hesitate even in the
 ' first step of your duty. Am I then no longer in the midst of
 ' that National Convention, whose honourable mission it was to
 ' destroy Kings and Royalty?

HAVING thus traced the proceedings of the Society for Con-
 stitutional Information, to the period when the commencement of
 the war with France necessarily interrupted the developement of
 their principles and designs by their correspondence with that coun-
 try,

try, your Committee will now lay before the House such particulars as relate to their proceedings at home, in concert with the London Corresponding Society; and with the several Societies in different parts of the country, during the same period.

From these it will appear, That not only the London Corresponding Society, but all the principal Societies in the country, have been regulated under the immediate auspices of the Society for Constitutional Information, and have, both in their origin and progress, looked up to that Society for their guidance and direction in the pursuit of their common object :

That particularly since the institution of the Corresponding Society, which appears from a very early period to have had an intimate connexion with the Society for Constitutional Information, a system of general correspondence has been established, by means of which the principles of that Society (such as they have been already stated) have been widely diffused and disseminated through the country :

That throughout the whole of this extensive correspondence, the strongest marks appear of an almost universal agreement and co-operation among the country Societies, not only in the general principles to which your Committee has already referred, but also in the nature and frame of the Societies, in the system of concert and delegation, and in the particular object of forming a National Convention for the purpose of carrying their principles into full effect; and that traces of this design are to be found in a greater or less degree at a very early period of this correspondence.

The London Corresponding Society was instituted in January 1791. A general account of the plan according to which it was formed and distributed into different divisions, has already been given in the last Report, and a list of the number of divisions, which had been gradually established, has been found among the papers in the possession of the Secretary.

In one of the first communications from the London Corresponding Society to the Society for Constitutional Information*, they state, that 'The Delegates of the Corresponding Society think it their duty to acquaint the Constitutional Society, without delay, of the subscription begun amongst several of their divisions for the defence of the prosecution said to be commenced against that worthy member of the Constitutional Society, Mr. Thomas Paine, in consequence of his valuable publication intitled "The Rights of Man;" and that they had no doubt that a numerous body would be found to follow an example, so just in itself, and so essential to the support of that small portion of liberty which the people of England are still supposed to enjoy. That the approbation and encouragement which their feeble endeavours had met with from the Constitutional Society, made them desirous of uniting more strongly and more immediately with that Society, and for this purpose they wished that six of their members might

* Appendix D.

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' be admitted into the Constitutional Society, after the manner of those received from the Societies at Sheffield and Norwich.'

The London Corresponding Society signify that they are highly favoured by the readiness of the Constitutional Society to admit six of their members, and that their sense of the favour so conferred will be best expressed by their close attendance at the instructive meetings of the Constitutional Society, and by their constant endeavours to forward the so beneficial, and so much wanted reform of parliamentary representation.

The following series of extracts is taken from the correspondence, both of the Society for Constitutional Information and of the London Corresponding Society, with the several Societies instituted in the country*.

The first is a letter from Sheffield to the Secretary of the Constitutional Society, dated 15th January 1792, stating that the Society established at Sheffield humbly solicits the advice and assistance of the Constitutional Society for the purpose of forming a connexion *with all similar Societies in England*; and adds, that information of the methods, terms, and manner of application for the above purpose, as likewise the admission of one of their members into the Constitutional Society, will be esteemed a particular favour, and gratefully acknowledged. In the postscript to the letter, an account is given of the origin of the Sheffield Society; and it is stated, that it at first originated in an assembly of five or six mechanics, who from conversation about the enormous high price of provisions, the unbounded authority of the monopolists of all ranks, from the king to the peasant, and the waste of the public property by placemen, pensioners, luxury, and debauchery, together with the mock representation of the people, concluded that nothing but ignorance in the people could suffer the natural rights of every free man to be thus violated. They formed a Society, which was gradually increasing, and divided into separate bodies. They re-published Paine's Rights of Man at the low price of 6d. each copy, to which they proposed to annex an abstract of the noted iniquitous Corn Bill of last year.

The same Society at Sheffield, in a letter to the Constitutional Society†, mention that their numbers increase, for that most of the towns and villages in the neighbourhood are forming themselves into similar associations, and strictly adhere to the mode of copying the Sheffield Society. They return thanks for the kind communications which they have received from the principal members of the Constitutional Society; and they enclose a parcel for the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society, in answer to a letter of his, by which he had informed them, that there were in London a number of mechanics, shop-keepers, &c. forming themselves into a Society, *on the broad basis of the Rights of Man*, and desiring to know the manner of conducting this business at Sheffield: In answer to which, the Sheffield Society had given them

* Appendix D.

† 14th March 1792.

their

their manner of proceeding, and hoped it might be of some use, as the improvement they were about to adopt was certainly the best for managing large bodies in great and populous towns, *viz.* dividing them into small bodies or meetings of ten persons each, and these ten persons to appoint a delegate; ten of these delegates to form another meeting; and so on, delegating from one to another, till at last they are reduced to a proper number for constituting the Committee or Grand Council.

The Society at Sheffield * expresses their determination to obtain a radical reform of the country, as soon as prudence and discretion will permit, and to establish it upon that system which is consistent with the Rights of Man; for these reasons, they request, that certain members of their Society may be admitted into the Constitutional Society, in order that the Society at Sheffield may be strengthened, and enabled to extend useful knowledge from town to village, and from village to town, until the whole nation be sufficiently enlightened and united in the same cause; which, they say, cannot fail of being the case, wherever the most excellent works of Mr. Thomas Paine find residence.

The Constitutional Society at Manchester transmit copy of their resolution † to the Constitutional Society in London, in which they resolve that *their thanks are due to Mr. Thomas Paine, for the publication of the Second Part of the Rights of Man, combining Principle and Practice: They style it a work of the highest importance to every nation under heaven, but particularly to this:* They express their hope, that in consequence of the effect of this work a complete reform in the present inadequate state of the representation of the people will be accomplished; and that the other great plans of public benefit which Mr. Paine has so powerfully recommended will speedily be carried into effect.

The delegates of the United Constitutional Societies at Norwich ‡ communicate to the London Society for Constitutional Information a number of resolutions, in which they express their happiness at the admission of the delegation from Sheffield, in order to form a plan of general information: They humbly beg to be admitted to the same favour, and express *their wish that all the Societies of a similar kind in England were strongly and indissolubly united in one political body:* They return their thanks to Mr. Thomas Paine, for his First and Second Parts of the Rights of Man: They sincerely wish that he may see his labours crowned with success, in the general diffusion of liberty and happiness among mankind: They signify that their numbers are increasing; and they earnestly entreat all their brethren to increase their associations, in order to form one grand extensive union of all the friends of general liberty.

In a letter § to the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society, the Society at Stockport return thanks to the Corresponding Society, for their kindness, which they say will be useful in the

* 14th March 1792.

‡ 24th March 1792.

† 15th March 1792.

§ 27th September 1792.

formation of the infant Society at that place; that they stand much in need of their experience in this particular. They state, that they have carefully perused the addresses, of which a parcel has been sent them by the London Corresponding Society; and observe on their contents in general, that the sentiments hardly rise to that height which they expected from men sensible of their full claims to absolute and uncontrollable liberty, *i. e. unaccountable to any power which they have not immediately constituted and appointed.* They further state, that these are their sentiments, whatever be those of the London Corresponding Society, though in the present state of political knowledge *it may be prudent not to avow them openly*; they desire to be informed of the means of accomplishing their common object; and they conclude with the following words:

‘ We observe one expression, which says, Numerous other reforms would undoubtedly take place, &c. &c.

‘ But we ask, How is that parliament to be chosen? Can we expect it from the present order of things? *Would not the evil be done away at once by the people assembled in Convention?*—Does it appear probable that the odious laws of which we complain will be abolished by any other way? *Can the grievances arising from aristocracy be redressed, while the ——— retains its present authority in the legislature? Is the universal right of conscience ever to be attained, while the B. maintain their seats on the ———?*

‘ Your thoughts on these important points, we most earnestly desire may be transmitted as soon as possible, not directed as the last, as we fear it will excite suspicion.

‘ (Signed) _____.

A letter from Margat* (the president) to the Friends of Universal Peace and the Rights of Man, at Stockport, says, ‘ With regard to the publications of the London Corresponding Society, they are expressed in as strong terms as prudence will permit, yet plainly enough to convince the public, that while we expect every thing from an honest and annual parliament, nothing short of such a senate, chosen by the whole nation, will satisfy us.’—The letter proceeds to state an intention of countenancing the struggle of the French nation against despotism and aristocracy, by addressing the French National Convention.

A copy of the address is enclosed, and a concurrence of the Stockport Society is solicited. The letter concludes thus: ‘ If on the contrary you disapprove of that mark of zeal towards the only nation that has hitherto undertaken to restore mankind to their just rights, please to communicate to us your objections.’

A letter from the editors of The Patriot †, to the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society, expresses their commendation of the laudable spirit which has induced the London Corresponding

* 11th October 1792.

† 15th October 1792.

Society to address the Convention of France; states the encouragement which they had given to the Society at Stockport; and exhorts the London Corresponding Society also to give it their sanction, advice, and support; announces that several Societies have been formed within the last three weeks at Edinburgh, and that they had received some most spirited communications from thence. The letter concludes: 'We clearly foresee that Scotland will soon take the lead of this country; and conceive it will be necessary to take the greatest care that an universal communication should be constantly kept up between the several Societies, however distant, and that all should determine to act upon the same principle, as near as may be, in a regular and active union. It was by this method that France became so thoroughly united, and we ought never to lose sight of it.'

A letter from the Secretary to the Society at Stockport*, to the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society, has these terms:

'I am directed by the *Friends of Universal Peace and the Rights of Man*, to inform you that we received two letters from you, the first dated September 21, requesting us to concert with you in transmitting to the French National Convention an address signed by every member, &c. &c.

'With respect to the *substance* of this letter, we believe that the cause of the French is that of every individual person in Europe, that is not fattening on plunder, or through ignorance, obstinacy, and inattention, sit unconcerned, and will not be persuaded to consider, although inevitable ruin should be the awful consequence.

'We therefore think it highly necessary to add our friendly aid and assistance, in order to stimulate the oppressed friends of freedom in France against all the despots in Europe (who are combined against the just and equal rights of man) by assuring them that we view their signal exertions and wonderful victories with admiration, together with the extinction of treacherous royalty, and the restoring to every individual his equal and indubitable rights, as fellow men and free citizens; and that our hearts are united with theirs as in one common cause, considering as in a great measure their victory our emancipation, together with their own.

'Yet, should it ever be the case that our ministry should be so perfidious as, contrary to their pledged faith of neutrality, to join the execrable band of despots against the cause of freedom, we will stand forward, even to the hazarding our lives, by using every justifiable means to counteract their machinations, and give to the friends of freedom all the encouragement and support which we severally unsupported can afford.'

A letter to the Secretary of the London Society for Constitutional Information *, states that the people of Leicester are to have their first adjourned meeting in a few days, and that they stand in need of a sort of *creed for immediate publication*; and one from the Norwich Society † states, that having found that the Friends of the People, and Society for Constitutional Information, do not exactly agree, they wish to know the reason. That it appears to them that the difference was this: The Friends of the People mean only a partial reform, because they leave out the words expressing the Duke of Richmond's plan, and talk only of a reform; while the Manchester people seem to intimate, by addressing Mr. Paine, that they were intent upon republican principles only; to come close to the main question, they desire to know whether the generality of the Societies mean to rest satisfied with the Duke of Richmond's plan only, or *whether it is their private design to rip up monarchy by the root, and to place democracy in its stead?* The letter then gives an account of the plan which the Norwich Society wish to obtain, and which has already been moved for at their general meeting, namely, a full and equal representation of the whole body of the people.

The Manchester Reformation Society state ‡, that the cause of liberty goes on rapidly in that town; their numbers increase; and they desire to be admitted to correspond with the London Society for Constitutional Information.

A Society at Leicester || request every particular requisite to enable them to establish a Constitutional Society there, similar to that in London, and those at Manchester, Stockport, &c. They desire all that is necessary by the first mail; they state, that they want laws, orders, principles, creeds, addresses, declarations, and resolutions; and a letter from a meeting at Coventry § solicits the London Society for Constitutional Information to transmit a plan of the Sheffield, or any other Society which they may think best adapted to produce the end of establishing a Constitutional Society at Coventry.

When the London Corresponding Society found that their conduct began to attract notice, they published a long justification of it ¶, which they communicated to the Society for Constitutional Information. This paper, the professed object of which is to prove the moderation of the Society, and to vindicate them from the imputation thrown out against them, concludes in the following words: 'Let us wait, and watch the ensuing session of Parliament, from which we have much to hope, and little to fear. The House of Commons may have been the source of our calamity—it may prove that of our deliverance; should it not, we trust we shall not prove ourselves unworthy of our forefathers, whose exertions in the cause of mankind so well deserve our imitation.'

* 9th Nov. 1792.

|| 15th Nov. 1792.

† 11th Nov. 1792.

§ 26th Nov. 1792.

‡ 13th Nov. 1792.

¶ 30th Nov. 1792.

YOUR COMMITTEE have thus given a view of the different proceedings to the close of the year 1792*. Early in 1793†, the joint correspondence of the two Societies in London with the country Societies seems to have been directed to the ostensible purpose of obtaining petitions to the House of Commons in favour of a reform in the Parliamentary representation, and also petitions from the same Societies against the continuance of the war. A series of letters relating to these objects is inserted in the Appendix: But your Committee think it necessary to call the particular attention of the House to extracts from some part of this correspondence, from which it will appear, that the measure of addressing petitions to the House of Commons in 1793, on the subject of Parliamentary reform, was adopted without either any approbation of that mode of application, or any hope of success in its professed object; and that the Societies approved of those petitions, even in the exceptionable language in which they were expressed, with no other view than that of accommodating themselves, for a time, to supposed prejudices and circumstances, and of opening the way to the prosecution of their design in that mode which they have since actually pursued, and which appears even then to have been in their contemplation. From some of these letters§ it is evident, that the London Corresponding Society had, previous to the month of March 1793 (although the letter itself, in which they did so, has not been found), stated, for the consideration of the country Societies, three propositions:

First, A Petition to Parliament.

Secondly, A Petition to the King.

Thirdly, A Convention.

And in a subsequent letter of the 4th of March, from the Corresponding Society to the Society at Sheffield, there is this paragraph:

‘With regard to petitioning Parliament, we are unanimously of opinion, *that such a petition will not produce a reform*; yet from many considerations we are now persuaded, *that if every Society in the island will send forward a petition*, we shall ultimately gain ground, for as much as it will force the members of the Senate repeatedly to discuss the subject, and their deliberations, printed in the different newspapers, will most naturally awaken the public mind towards the object of our pursuit. The nation, once informed that a reform in Parliament is sought for in different quarters, gives rise to debates in the House of Commons (and is acknowledged in every rank to be wanting), will begin to exercise their own reasons on the subject;—*arrived at that period, we presume our business will be nearly accomplished.*’

* Appendix C.

† 12th April.
k 2

§ Appendix E.

In a letter from the United Political Societies at Norwich, dated 5th March 1793, to the Society for Constitutional Information, they state, that they see a great propriety in universal suffrage and annual election; but wish to know what has been collected to be the sense of the people; that the Corresponding Societies of London have recently submitted three propositions for their investigation:

Whether a petition to Parliament, or an address to the King, or a Convention: They say, that they are a conquered people under that degrading necessity—to state their grievances to the House of Commons, with a request for redress; and should they refuse to grant their reasonable petitions, they have still got (no thanks to them) a formidable engine that will convey the insult to the remotest parts of the kingdom.—As to the propriety of the second, they say, they are dubious of its good consequences.—Lastly, as to a Convention, they say, *it is the object that they pursue; that they esteem any other means only in subordination to, and as having a tendency to accomplish that desirable end;* but, they add, wishing to be in union with their brethren, they desire to know whether it is necessary to obtain signatures to a petition.

The answer to this letter from Norwich has been already mentioned in the former Report: It refers to the three questions stated, and contains the paragraph inserted in the former Report.

‘Where, then, are we to look for the remedy?—to that Parliament of which we complain?—to the Executive Power, which is implicitly obeyed, if not anticipated in Parliament?—or to ourselves, represented in some meeting of delegates for the especial purpose of reform, which we suppose you understand by the term *Convention*?’—It then proceeds:

‘It is the end of each of these propositions, that we ought to look to; and as success in a good cause must be the effect of perseverance, and the rising reason of the time, let us determine with coolness, but let us persevere with decision. As to a Convention, we regard it as a plan, the most desirable and most practicable, so soon as the great body of the people shall be courageous and virtuous enough to join us in the attempt. Hitherto we have no reason to believe that the moment is arrived for that purpose. As to any petition to the Crown, we believe it hopeless in its consequences. With respect to the last of the proposals, we are at a loss to advise. If the event is looked to in the vote which may be obtained from that body to whom this petition is to be addressed, which of us can look to it without the prospect of an absolute negative? In this point of view, therefore, it cannot require a moment’s consideration.

‘But if we regard the *policy* of such a measure, it may, in our apprehension, be well worth considering as a warning voice to our present legislators, and as a signal for imitation to the majority of the people.

‘Should

' Should such a plan be vigorously and generally pursued, it would hold out a certainty to our fellow-countrymen, that we are not a handful of individuals unworthy of attention or consideration, who desire the restoration of the ancient liberties of England; but, on the contrary, it might bring into light that host of well-meaning men, who, in the different towns and counties of this realm, are silently but seriously anxious for *reformation in the government*.

' We exhort you with anxiety to pursue your laudable endeavours for the common good, and never to despair of the public cause.'

The letters of the Corresponding Society of the 17th May and 25th July 1793, and of the Norwich Societies of the 5th of July, and various passages in the proceedings of the Scotch Convention, and of those of the Society at Sheffield, will be found to contain additional proofs of what has been represented to be the real view and intention of presenting these petitions; but being subsequent to the time when these petitions were presented, they will be more particularly referred to in stating the transactions during the remainder of the year 1793, of which your Committee will proceed to take notice.

After the rejection of the petitions in May 1793, and the determination of the House upon the subject of a change in the representation in Parliament, the correspondence inserted in the Appendix * will show that the union and concert between the two Societies in London seem to have acquired additional strength. It is soon after distinctly stated, *that more effectual means than petitions must be adopted*†; and early in the autumn of 1793 ‡, the joint efforts of the two Societies were directed to the formation of a Convention at Edinburgh, to which delegates were to be sent from London, and were invited from many of the country Societies. Many of these Societies actually sent delegates; and of those who did not, several approved of the measure, and only objected to the time; while others, approving both of the time and of the measure, declined any share in it on account of their not having received a sufficiently early notice, or of their being unable to afford the expense with which it was necessarily attended.

The immediate foundations of these proceedings appear to have been a letter from the Corresponding Society §, May 17th, 1793, to the Friends of the People at Edinburgh, which, after expressing their desire *to unite, not only with each other, but with every other Society throughout the nation*, proceeds: ' Our petitions, you will have learned, have all been unsuccessful; our attention must now, therefore, be turned to some more effectual means; from your Society we would willingly learn them, and you, on your part, may

* Appendix C.

† Appendix C.

‡ 25th, 28th Oct. 8th Nov. and 6th Dec. 1793.

§ Appendix E.

' depend

' depend upon our adopting the firmest measures, provided they are constitutional; and we hope the country will not be behind us.'

A letter from Skirving to Hardy, dated 25th May 1793, is inserted in the Appendix, and contains many passages which appear to be very material, but which will be more particularly referred to in the account of the correspondence of the Scotch Convention.

On the 10th of June 1793, the Secretary of the Corresponding Society writes to the Secretary to the Constitutional Society at Birmingham: ' We are entirely of your opinion with regard to the necessity of a *general union*; and believe as you do, that when once the country shall be so united, the Neros of the day will be forced to yield to the just demand of a long and fore oppressed people.'

A letter from the Political Societies at Norwich, which appears to have been received by the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society, on the 25th of June 1793, contains the following passage: ' We received your friendly letter wherein you stated three propositions; first, a petition to his Majesty; or to Parliament; or, a National Convention. I gave my opinion on the subject to the Constitutional Society at London, and found their ideas congenial to my own, viz. An address to the King, futile; a petition to Parliament, as a conquered people, tolerable; a National Convention, if circumstances permitted, best of all.'

And in a letter from the Secretary of the Corresponding Society, of the 25th of July 1793, which appears to be an answer to the foregoing, it is said, ' With regard to the questions themselves, however individuals may have made up their minds on them, the public seemed most to *approve of the mode of petitioning Parliament*; we accordingly acquiesced, and sent in a petition, signed by nearly 6,000 persons; with this letter you will receive a copy of it, and of its fate you are doubtless not unacquainted.' After saying that their firmness is not confined to words, and that they will be foremost in asserting and recovering the lost liberties of the country, the letter recommends to the Norwich Society to form a junction with all others associated for the same purpose throughout the nation; and above all *orderly and courageously to prepare themselves for the event, as they cannot expect to repossess their rights without a struggle*; that it may be advantageous to humanity, that they should show themselves at first *an indignant oppressed people, in whom is not yet entirely extinct the valour of their forefathers*.

In the month of October the resolutions * were passed in the Society for Constitutional Information, and the London Corresponding Society, relative to the Convention at Edinburgh, which have been already taken notice of.

The Society for Constitutional Information at Sheffield insert, in a letter † to the London Constitutional Society, the following extract from a letter §, which was sent to the Convention at Edinburgh:

* Appendix C. † Appendix E. § 1st November 1793. ' That

' That it would have given this Society the most heartfelt satisfaction to have had a delegation present at their approaching Convention, had we received timely notice of their wishes that it should be so: But it unfortunately happens that all the Gentlemen belonging to the Society, which it would choose for so important a business, are so previously engaged in affairs which they cannot possibly postpone in so short an interval, that it is not in our power to comply with their requisition on the present occasion.

' This Society are also of opinion, that to give such a measure its full effect, it would be necessary that the other Societies in South Britain should have communication with each other on the subject, and be able to ascertain that deputations would be sent from, at least, a majority of the Societies in this part of the kingdom. And, to evince that we should be happy to unite our efforts with their's in one firm and settled plan, we assure them, that if they think proper to fix another meeting in January or February, or any other time which may be more agreeable, and give us immediate notice thereof, and that they wish to see delegates from the several Societies in this part of the kingdom, we will write to all those we are in correspondence with, to get such a delegation as may be truly respectable and important.'

In a letter from the Constitutional Society at Leeds, dated 5th November 1793*, to the Society for Constitutional Information in London, is the following paragraph:

' It is with great satisfaction we read your letter, and approve of your having elected your delegates to serve upon such a laudable undertaking; but, if you meant for the Leeds Society to adopt the same measures, shall be glad if you will answer this immediately; as we are not acquainted with the time of their sitting, we fear our delegates will be too late.'

A letter † from the Society of Birmingham to the London Constitutional Society ‡ states, that they had received a letter from the Constitutional Society, which had obtained the approbation of every member present, and that they would at all times concur with the Constitutional Society in any measure that may have a tendency to hasten the return of departed liberty; that the object of the mission of delegates to the *Scotch Convention* is a measure upon which depends the regeneration of Britain from a state of slavery to a state of freedom and happiness; and that the Society at Birmingham have only to regret that, at present, their ability will not allow them to co-operate with the Constitutional Society, by sending a delegate to the Convention at Edinburgh; and this they state to be one of the calamities of the war.

The Society at Coventry transmit § to the London Constitutional Society the copy of a resolution || of the 28th October 1793,

* Appendix E.

§ 19th Nov. 1793.

† 6th Nov. 1793.

|| Appendix E.

‡ Appendix E.

relative to the election of delegates, communicating their approbation of a measure which they conceive peculiarly calculated to accelerate the acquisition of the object proposed.

THE PROCEEDINGS of the Convention, which assembled at Edinburgh in the close of 1793, appear to your Committee to have been of such importance, and to throw so much light upon the subject of this part of the Report, that it has been thought necessary to give a connected account of them in this place, with references to extracts from the minutes of that assembly inserted in the Appendix *; and, in order to render this account more complete, it may be necessary shortly to recur to the proceedings of two other meetings which had taken place at Edinburgh at an earlier period.

A number of persons, styling themselves a General Convention of Delegates from the Societies of the Friends of the People throughout Scotland, appear, from the papers laid before the Committee, to have assembled at Edinburgh on the 11th of December 1792, for the purpose, as they alleged, of concerting measures for obtaining a redress of grievances, and for restoring the freedom of election, and an equal representation of the people in Parliament.—This meeting was composed of a number of persons assembled from different parts of Scotland, and delegated by the various Clubs and Societies which had lately been established in that country under the name of The Friends of the People.—They amounted to about 170, amongst whom were some persons of a higher situation and rank in life, most of whom however afterwards discontinued their attendance.—Skirving, since convicted and transported by sentence of the Court of Justiciary, acted as their Secretary, and continued uniformly to act in that capacity.

After sitting a few days, this Convention appears to have adjourned to the end of April 1793, when they again assembled, though not in such numbers as before, Skirving still officiating as their Secretary, and corresponding with all the Societies in Scotland, and several in England, on the subject of a reform in Parliament. This Convention separated in four days, and appointed their next meeting to take place at Edinburgh on the 29th of October following.

About the time when the first Convention separated, in April 1793, a correspondence seems to have commenced between Skirving (the Secretary) and various Societies in England; and the system of uniting all these Societies in Great Britain and Ireland, in common measures, appears to have been regularly acted upon. From a variety of letters found in the possession of Skirving when apprehended at Edinburgh on the 5th December 1793, it appears that he corresponded, as Secretary of the Scotch Convention, with the following Societies:

* Appendix F.

The Society for Constitutional Information, Crown and Anchor Tavern, London ;
 The London Corresponding Society ;
 The Society of the Friends of the People, Free Masons' Tavern, London ;
 The Sheffield Constitutional Society ;
 Leeds Constitutional Society ;
 Nottingham Society for promoting a Parliamentary Reform ;
 and a Society at Norwich.

The correspondence with the Sheffield Constitutional Society commences in April 1793.

Three letters from their Secretary were found in the possession of Skirving, to whom they are addressed.

The first of these, inclosing a copy of the petition then about to be presented to the House of Commons—The second, inclosing a set of resolutions against the war, which the Secretary transmits, with a request that they should be adopted by all the Societies in Great Britain—And the third, dated the 27th of May *, after acknowledging the receipt of a letter of the 10th of that month from Skirving, communicating to the Sheffield Society the proceedings of the Convention at Edinburgh, which separated in April, approves of its proceedings, and states an address made by their late president to the Sheffield Society, which, after complaining of the late rejection of the Sheffield petition in the House of Commons, declares, that a reform in Parliament can *never be brought about but by the powerful interposition of the great body of the people.*

The Society of Leeds begin their correspondence with Skirving, by a letter of the 29th of May 1793 †, by desiring *fraternal communication* with the Society of Edinburgh, requesting its assistance and instruction, and that though their numbers are few, not exceeding 200, they are men, and determined to instruct their neighbours in their common interest.

On the 18th of May 1793, the Friends of the People, Free Masons' Tavern, London, passed a vote of thanks ‡ to the Convention which had taken place the beginning of that year, for their zeal and activity in the cause of Parliamentary Reform, and recommended a continuance of the same spirit, industry, and temper, during the recess of Parliament. This vote § appears to have been transmitted to Skirving in a letter from the Secretary, which requests that the vote of thanks might be communicated to the various Societies in Scotland.

On the 23d of July, the Secretary of the Friends of the People wrote another letter to Skirving || (apparently in answer to a letter from him on the subject), in which are the following passages—
 ' The plan of delegates would be very improper in this country at

* Vide Appendix F. (No. 1.)

† Vide Appendix F. (No. 2.)

‡ Vide Appendix F. (No. 3.)

§ Vide Appendix F. (No. 4.)

|| Vide Appendix F. (N. 5.)

' present. A very small part of it indeed would be active for reform. If such a meeting is attempted, it will operate, like many rash steps of some who wish well to the cause, much to its disadvantage.'

Another letter, dated the 26th of October, from the Secretary of the Friends of the People in London *, addressed also to Skirving, acknowledges the receipt of several copies of the Trials of Muir and Palmer, which he says he will bind up with the Trial of Paine, and recommends to the Scottish Convention to avoid the violence which has done mischief to the cause of reform in England.

The correspondence of the London Corresponding Society with Skirving, previous to May 1793, does not appear; but a letter of the 17th of this month, from the Secretary to Skirving, which has been already referred to, solicits a renewal of correspondence, and more intimate co-operation.

To this an answer was returned by Skirving, dated 25th May 1793, which has also been before referred to, and has the following remarkable passages:

' If we fought only the extirpation of one set of interested men from the management of national affairs, that place might be given to another set, *without affecting the vital of the system adverse to reform*, this might be easily accomplished; but to cut up wide and deep-rooted prejudices, to give effectual energy to the dictates of truth in favour of public virtue and national prosperity, in opposition to self, and all its interested habits, and to withstand and overawe the final efforts of the powers of darkness, is the work of the *whole*, and not of a *part*;—a work to which mankind, till this awful period, were never adequate; because never, *till now*, disposed to fraternize.'

' Let us begin in earnest to make up our minds relative to the extent of reform which we ought to seek, be prepared to justify it, and to controvert objections. Let us model the whole in the public mind. *Let us provide every stake and stay of the tabernacle which we would erect*; so that when the tabernacles of oppression in the palaces of ambition are broken down, under the madness and folly of their supporters, we may then, without anarchy and all dangerous delay, erect at once our tabernacle of righteousness.'

On the 5th of October the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society again writes to Skirving †, highly approving of the idea of a Convention, and expressing his belief that the London Corresponding Society will send delegates to it: 'Our freedom, as you justly observe, depends entirely on ourselves, and upon our availing ourselves of this opportunity, which once lost may not be so soon recovered.'

* Vide Appendix F. (No. 6.)

† Vide Appendix E.

On the 8th of November, he again writes to the delegates Margaret and Gerald*, then at Edinburgh, informing them of what had been doing in the Society since their departure; and requests to be favoured 'with the number of delegates in the Convention, and the number from England also, and how the civil and military power relishes your meeting.'

On the 29th of November he again writes to them, stating that the General Committee 'are highly pleased with the proposed union with our Northern brethren; and beg you will use every exertion in your power to establish that desirable union upon a firm and permanent basis. It gives us great pleasure and encouragement to hear that the spirit of liberty is so flourishing in the North; and are happy to inform you that the same noble spirit is making a rapid progress in the South.'

The instructions from the Corresponding Society to Margaret and Gerald, dated the 24th of October 1793, signed by their Chairman and Secretary, were also found in the possession of Skirving. They consist of nine different articles. By article 1st, the delegate is instructed, that 'he shall on no-account depart from the original object and principles of this Society, namely, the obtaining annual Parliaments and universal suffrage by rational and lawful means:

'2d. To support the opinion that Representatives in Parliament ought to be paid by their constituents:

'7th. That it is the duty of the people to resist any Act of Parliament repugnant to the original principles of the constitution, as would be every attempt to prohibit Associations for the purpose of reform.'

The instructions by the Society for Constitutional Information to their delegates were also found in the possession of Skirving; the purport of which has been already stated in the former Report of the Committee.

There was likewise found in the possession of Skirving, a letter † from the Secretary of the Leeds Constitutional Society, addressed 'To the members of the Scotch Convention,' and which is inserted at full length in the Appendix I.

From the papers produced to the Committee, it appears that this Convention did accordingly assemble at Edinburgh on the 28th of October last, to the number of about 150 persons; and after sitting four days, in the hope of being joined by the delegates from England, they separated, in the apprehension that the English delegates did not mean to attend. Two days afterwards Margaret and Gerald, with two other persons, one of them a delegate from the London Society for Constitutional Information, and the other a delegate from Sheffield, arrived in Edinburgh. Skirving immediately called together a new Convention, to meet upon the 19th of November; and in an advertisement inserted in the newspaper

* Vide Appendix F. (No. 7.)

† 18th November 1793.

‡ Appendix F. (No. 8.)

called the *Edinburgh Gazetteer* *, and by hand-bills, strongly urged the necessity of the delegates throughout Scotland attending to this meeting.

About the 4th or 5th of November, Messrs. Hamilton Rowan and Butler, members of the Society of United Irishmen of Dublin, arrived at Edinburgh from Ireland, though with no immediate commission on this business; but during the week they remained in that place, they, with the English delegates, attended the meeting of the General Committee of the Convention, in which it was agreed to receive these two gentlemen as delegates from the Society of United Irishmen. Mr. Hamilton Rowan appears to have acknowledged, by voluntary declaration before the Sheriff of Edinburgh, that he had been solicited by letter from Scotland on the subject of sending delegates from the Society of United Irishmen to attend the Scotch Convention; but he declined mentioning the names of the person or persons who had so corresponded with him.

This Convention accordingly met on the 19th of November, to the number of about 160, and rather a greater proportion of country delegates than before. Rowan and Butler were by this time returned to Ireland. But the English delegates remained, and regularly attended the Convention as long as it continued to meet.

During the three first days the Convention appears, from its minutes, to have chiefly employed itself on matters of form; but having on the 22d November 1793, changed its title to that of 'The British Convention of Delegates of the People, associated to obtain *Universal Suffrage and Annual Parliaments*,' they, in almost every particular, assumed the style and mode of proceeding adopted by the National Convention of France. They divided themselves into Sections—Committees of Organization, Instructions, Finance, and Secrecy; denominated their meetings *Sittings*; granted honours of *sittings*; made honourable mention in their minutes of patriotic donations; entered their minutes as made in the first year of the British Convention; instituted Primary Societies; Provincial Assemblies and Departments; received from the Sections a variety of motions and reports—some of which have the words '*Vive la Convention*' prefixed to them, and end with '*ça ira*;' and some dated '*First year of the British Convention, one and indivisible*.'

Having at last, on the 28th of November, with peculiar solemnity, passed a resolution, which necessarily attracted the attention of the law officers of the Crown, the ringleaders, with all their papers, were seized, early on the morning of the 5th of December, and carried before the proper magistrate for examination. The Resolution alluded to, and which appears from the Minutes (extracts from which are stated in the Appendix) to have been the subject of frequent and deliberate consideration, was deemed by the Convention as not expedient to be inserted immediately in its proper place. The

* Appendix F. (No. 9.)

insertion of it appears to have been postponed till the close of the Convention, and a blank was left for that purpose in the Minutes. The motion, with the resolutions founded thereon, was discovered amongst the papers of the delegate from the Society for Constitutional Information in London, and is of the following tenor :

‘ Resolved, That the following declaration and resolutions be inserted at the end of our minutes ; *viz.*

‘ That this Convention, considering the calamitous consequences of any act of the Legislature which may tend to deprive the whole or any part of the people of their undoubted right to meet, either by themselves or by delegation, to discuss any matter relative to their common interest, whether of a public or private nature, and holding the same to be totally inconsistent with the first principles and safety of society, and also subversive of our known and acknowledged constitutional liberties, do hereby declare, before God and the world, that we shall follow the wholesome example of former times, by paying no regard to any act which shall militate against the constitution of our country, and shall continue to assemble and consider of the best means by which we can accomplish a real representation of the people, and annual election, until compelled to desist by superior force.

‘ And we do resolve, That the first notice given for the introduction of a Convention Bill, or any bill of a similar tendency to that passed in Ireland in the last session of their Parliament ;

‘ Or any Bill for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, or the act for preventing wrongous Imprisonment, and against undue delays in trial in North Britain ;

‘ Or in case of an invasion ; or the admission of any foreign troops whatsoever into Great Britain or Ireland ;

‘ All or any one of these calamitous circumstances, shall be a signal to the several delegates to repair to such place as the Secret Committee of this Convention shall appoint ; and the first seven members shall have power to declare the *sittings permanent*, shall constitute a Convention, and twenty-one proceed to business ;

‘ The Convention doth therefore resolve, That each delegate, immediately on his return home, do convene his constituents, and explain to them the necessity of electing a delegate or delegates, and of establishing a fund, without delay, against any of these emergencies, for his or their expence ; and that they do instruct the said delegate or delegates to hold themselves ready to depart at one hour’s warning.’

These Resolutions appear, from the minutes, to have been immediately followed up by the appointment of a Secret Committee, whose powers and mode of proceeding are precisely and distinctly marked out in the minutes of the Convention. It is proper

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per farther to state, that on the 4th of December, the day preceding the arrest of the ringleaders, when they probably had either received information, or had suspected from their own conduct that measures were to be taken against them, the Convention, on the motion of Margarot, unanimously resolved,

‘ That the moment of any illegal dispersion of the British Convention shall be considered as a summons to the delegates to repair to the place of meeting appointed for the Convention of Emergency by the Secret Committee; and that the Secret Committee be instructed, without delay, to proceed to fix the place of meeting.’

Upon the evening of the 5th of December, the Convention met, notwithstanding the arrest of their leading members on the morning of that day, and proceeded instantly to declare themselves permanent, and to meet in spite of the magistrates; but were prevented from proceeding further by the unexpected appearance of the magistrates, to whose authority they refused to submit, until the Provost of the city seized the Sheffield delegate, their President, and compelled him to leave the chair. They again met on the evening of the 6th of December, in a house in the suburbs of the city, and were proceeding with the same violence as on the preceding evening, when the Sheriff of the county interrupted and dispersed them. Since this period no public meeting has been held; but they have continued to meet privately and in different Societies, and appear still to carry on a secret correspondence with various parts of England and Scotland. An abstract of the minutes of this Convention, and of the most material motions and proceedings held amongst these persons, and three letters to the Secretary of the Corresponding Society, are subjoined in the Appendix to this Report*.

SUBSEQUENT to the dispersion of the Scotch Convention, the plan for calling another Convention in England became the immediate object of the two Societies in London. An account of their proceedings for this purpose has already been laid before the House in the former Report; but in order to give a more connected view of the whole subject, your Committee have inserted, in order of time, in the Appendix, the same proceedings to which they have already referred. Your Committee having observed, that the variation between the entry on the books of the Society for Constitutional Information, of the 11th of April 1794, and the entry of the Report received the same day, from the joint Committee of the two Societies, is likely to be relied on, as tending to show that the Society for Constitutional Information did not concur with their Committee in the design of assembling a pretended General Convention of the people, have inserted at full length in the Appendix† all that appears in the books of the Constitutional Society on that

* Appendix F. Nos. 10, 11, 12, and 13.

† Appendix C.

subject.

subject. They have also thought it right to insert the account given of this transaction, in the examination of Mr. Thompson, a member of this House, to which they refer *.

In pursuance of the plan which they have adopted, the Committee have next inserted such correspondence and proceedings of the Societies in the country, as have passed since the dispersion of the Convention at Edinburgh with relation to the measures to be taken in consequence of that event, and to their concurrence in the design, formed in London, for assembling another Convention in England.

At a general meeting of Delegates, held at Norwich †, it was unanimously resolved, 'That one or more delegates shall be sent to the next General Convention, as soon as called for by their London correspondents ‡.

In a letter § to the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society ||, from the Norwich Societies, they desire to know whether the Friends of the People consent to a Convention, and whether they will take an active part.—'Many of our friends are fully convinced of the necessity, legality, and rationality of a Convention; but *quære whether the time be expedient?*'

Some persons, who describe themselves as Friends to a radical Reform, write from Newcastle upon Tyne **, to the Secretary of the Corresponding Society ††, that they dare assert the natural and unalienable rights of man, and have formed themselves into Societies, which meet weekly, admitting none but *known friends*, and have assumed no name but that of Newspaper Companies. *They were in great spirits while the British Convention continued to act; but after their suppression, a damp was cast on the whole—Subscriptions were ready to be sent off the very night they were suppressed.—They wish to copy the example of the London Corresponding Society, and to know their views and intentions as soon as convenient; and desiring to be favoured with the correspondence of that Society, they conclude, by expressing a hope 'that the hydra of tyranny and imposition may soon fall under the guillotine of truth and reason.'* The Corresponding Society return an answer, in which they exhort the Society at Newcastle to be assured that the glorious reign of *Liberty and Equality* will, ere long, be established, and *modern governments, with every appendage of wickedness and corruption, will flee from their genial influence.* They complain of the rapid advances of despotism in Great Britain, and express their readiness cordially to *unite with every Society* in the three kingdoms, who have for their object a full and effectual representation of the People; they therefore have deputed six of their members to meet six members of the Society for Constitutional Information, to form a Committee of Correspondence and Co-operation. 'This Committee meets regularly twice a week, and any member delegated

* Appendix G.

§ 20th April 1794.

†† Appendix H.

† 24th Feb. 1794.

|| Appendix H.

‡ Appendix H.

** 20th May 1794.

' by your Society will meet with every information required. We
' inclose you a few of our resolutions, entered into at our General
' Meeting on the 14th of April, which will be sufficiently explana-
' tory of our sentiments and views. We heartily concur with you
' in wishing that the hydra of tyranny and imposition may soon fall
' under the guillotine of truth and reason.'

A letter * to the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society from the Secretary of the Constitutional Society at Sheffield †, gives an account of a meeting at Halifax. The Friends of Peace and Reform at Halifax held a general public meeting in the open air, on April 21st, 1794, at which were many Friends from Leeds, Wakefield, Huddersfield, Bradford, and the adjacent neighbourhood. The Friends of Freedom, after the meeting, agreed to hold a General Meeting of Delegates, in order to consider of the *measures to be adopted by them preparatory to a General Convention*. The people of Halifax were advised by the Society at Sheffield, to *defer the meeting of delegates until further information from the London Corresponding Society* on that subject; and, for that reason, application was made to the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society, requesting as early intelligence as possible on that important business.

The Society at Bristol applaud the resolution of the London Corresponding Society for *forming another General Convention* ‡, and state § that their increasing numbers give them every reasonable hope of soon being able more effectually to co-operate with that Society; they desire a sketch of the plan respecting the General Convention. In the answer of the London Corresponding Society it is stated, that a printed circular letter from them has been determined upon, of which the Society at Bristol may expect a copy in a few days. This refers to the *circular letter for calling a Convention*, inserted by your Committee in their former Report.

Your Committee have thought it right in this place to call the attention of the House to the proceedings of a meeting held at Sheffield on the 7th of April 1794, which form a very material part of these transactions; although it does not appear that at that meeting any resolution was passed expressing an intention to send delegates to the intended Convention.

These proceedings consist of an address to the King; an address to the nation; certain resolutions; and speeches (printed together with them, and) delivered on the same day by a person calling himself Henry Yorke. The title is as follows:

- ' Proceedings of the Public Meeting held at Sheffield, in the
- ' open air, on the 7th of April 1794, and also an Address to
- ' the British Nation, being An Exposition of the Motives
- ' which have determined the people of Sheffield to petition the
- ' House of Commons no more on the Subject of Parliamentary
- ' Reform.'

* 11th May 1794.

† Appendix H.

‡ Appendix H.

§ 24th April 1794.

In the course of these proceedings, it was moved, 'That a *petition* be presented to the House of Commons, for a Reform in the Representation of the People in Parliament:' But so marked was the disapprobation given by the whole meeting to this measure, that not one single person *seconded* the motion, but a most profound silence, interrupted only by a few murmurs, was observed.

An account is afterwards given of one of Yorke's speeches, in which, after speaking of general history, there is the following passage :

'It must be granted that this experience is important, because it teaches the suffering nations of the present day, in what manner to prepare *their combustible ingredients*, and humanists in what manner *enkindle* them, so as to produce with effect that *grand political explosion*, which at the same time that it buries despotism, already convulsive and agonizing, in ruins, may raise up the people to the dignity and sublime grandeur of freedom.

'When such a revolution of sentiment shall have dispersed the mists of prejudice; when, by the incessant thunderings from the press, the meanest cottager of our country shall be enlightened, and the sun of reason shall shine in its fullest meridian over us, then *the commanding voice of the whole people shall recommend the five hundred and fifty-eight Gentlemen in St. Stephen's Chapel to go about their business.*

The resolutions adopted at the meeting were :

'1st. That the people being the true and only source of government, the freedom of speaking and writing upon any subject, cannot be denied to the members of a free government, without offering the grossest insult to the majesty of the people.

'2d. That therefore the condemnation of citizens Muir, Palmer, Skirving, Margarot, and Gerald, to transportation, for exposing the corruptions of the British government, was an act better suited to the maxims of a despotic than a free government.

'3d. That the address which has now been read, be presented to the King, in behalf of the above persecuted patriots.

'4th. That in every country where the people have no share in their government, *taxation is tyranny.*

'5th. That therefore a government is tyrannical or free, in proportion as the people are equally or unequally represented.

'6th. Convinced of this truth, it is the opinion of this meeting that the people ought to demand as a *right*, and not petition as a *favour*, for universal representation.

'7th. That therefore we will petition the House of Commons no more on this subject.'

And lastly (after agreeing to a petition to the King respecting negro slavery, and passing several resolutions on that subject),

'That the Committee of the Sheffield-Constitutional Society be desired to see that the above resolutions be *carried into effect*; and

‘ that they prepare an address to the British nation, explanatory of the motives which have induced this Meeting to adopt the resolution of no more petitioning the House of Commons on the subject of reform.’

The following passages are extracted from this Address:

‘ Friends and Countrymen,

‘ We have this day decided, with the exception of only one dissentient voice, that the House of Commons shall never again be petitioned by us on the subject of Parliamentary Reform.’

The Address then recites the words of the petition of the 8th of April 1793, [‘ That the House of Commons is not in the just sense of the words what your petitioners are from form obliged to term it, *viz.* the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament assembled;’] and then proceeds, in different passages, as follows:

‘ Our Petition was received with the utmost indignation by the House of Commons, which was no more than we expected—

‘ And although our Petition was disdainfully rejected, because not couched in language sufficiently polite and respectful for the *five hundred and fifty-eight Gentlemen* who sit at the House of Commons; yet, believe us, fellow citizens, we are still of opinion, that the matter it contained was not only just and proper, but, we think, that even the language which gave so much offence to the *honourable Gentlemen was much too polite and too moderate for us.* For if the House of Commons were the real representatives of the people, we certainly had a right to *dictate, and not to petition,* because they could be considered in no other light than as the organs of the public will; and if they refused to obey that will, they would be usurpers and not representatives.—

‘ However the Petition, such as it was, being termed disrespectful, was thrown out by a majority of 79, there being 29 only who voted for its being received, and 108 who voted against it.

‘ Such imperious treatment rather gives *warning* than strikes terror.

‘ We said to the House of Commons, ‘ We are wronged and aggrieved: *Will you right us, and redress our grievances, or will you not? If you will, we shall be satisfied; if you will not, we shall seek redress some other way. This is the sole question with us; and we put it, as we thought, in a most becoming style to the House of Commons. But our petition being scouted, we shall trouble them no more with our coarse and unmannerly language.* ‘ It will be our duty to proceed, as we have uniformly done hitherto, in enlightening the public mind; and when a complete revolution of sentiment shall take place (as *will shortly be the case*) in our country, we shall open our mouths in that key we think most agreeable to ourselves.’ ‘ And our voice, together with that of our disfranchised countrymen, will resemble, perhaps, the thunderings from Mount Sinai!’

‘ Those who have a right to speak in a dictatorial tone, disgrace themselves by petitioning.’—

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These essential principles are both easy and comprehensive. On these we build our right to representation, and *renounce the idea of future petitions*. By these maxims, we find that every Englishman is free; and that in the *election of a supreme magistrate*, or in the delegation of legislative powers, he concedes his actions to a certain superintendence, for the express purpose of preventing liberty from vaulting over its limits, and introducing a system of universal violence, injury, or licentiousness. And although either of *these two delegated powers* be sufficient to keep any individual to his duty, or to controul every association in the community, yet they are *always inferior to the force which the whole society might exert*, and are amenable to that society, *either in an assembly of the nation, or in a deputation formed for the purpose*.—

Acts of Parliament, unless sanctioned by the approving voice of the whole community, or their representatives, are *nothing less than arbitrary edicts under different names*, and bear a strong resemblance to the rescripts of the Emperors, or the decretals of the Vatican.

What is the constitution to us, if we are nothing to it? And what is any government but tyranny, in which the people have no share? The constitution of Britain, indeed, is highly extolled, as the greatest effort of human wisdom; so is the constitution of Turkey at Constantinople: But these are prejudices; and the long tyranny of prejudice is *verging to a speedy termination*.

Yes, countrymen, we demand equality of rights, in which is included equality of representation; without which terror is law, and the obligations of justice are weakened, because unsanctioned by the sacred voice of the people. We are not speaking of that visionary equality of property, the practical assertion of which would desolate the world, and re-plunge it into the darkest and wildest barbarism; but that equality we claim is to make the slave a man, the man a citizen, and the citizen an integral part of the state; *to make him a joint sovereign, and not a subject*.

The reasons which induced the meeting at Sheffield to omit any resolutions upon the subject of the intended Convention, have been distinctly stated, by two persons who had been Secretaries to the Constitutional Society in that town.

From their examination it appears, that a number of printed circular letters had been received at Sheffield from the Secretary to the London Corresponding Society, relative to a Convention, and that the Sheffield Society objected to the calling it at this time, but had no objection to the measure itself; that it was their opinion that the British Convention at Edinburgh ought to have secured the confidence of the people by a public address to the nation, before they had ventured to sit as a permanent body; and that the address from Sheffield to the nation, containing a recommendation that no more petitions should be presented to Parliament, was intended to prepare the people for a Convention.

While these proceedings were taking place in different parts of England, with a view to a general Convention, it appears from the

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information contained in the letters from the Secretary of State, which have been already referred to, that measures of a similar tendency were carrying on with great activity, and to a great extent, in Scotland. The appointment of delegates to attend a Convention to be assembled at some place in England at an early period, seems to have been very generally recommended by the Committee at Edinburgh.

The naming the place was for the present omitted, but it was promised to be shortly announced through the Secret Committee, in the same manner as appears from the circular letter of the London Corresponding Society (inserted in the former Report) to have been intended in this part of the kingdom; and the invitation to appoint delegates appears to have been circulated by the same emissaries who were employed by the Committee at Edinburgh for the purpose of promoting the plan of arming those with whom they were in correspondence.

FROM a review of these proceedings, it indisputably appears that the immediate and ostensible object professed to be aimed at by the measures which have been related (if stated within the narrowest limits) was that of effecting no less fundamental a change in the frame of the House of Commons, than the introduction of universal suffrage in the election of it, and rendering the period of the election annual: That through the whole course of the correspondence which has been carried on, and the concert which has been formed by different Societies for this purpose, no idea has for a long time been pointed at, of obtaining this change by any *application to Parliament*; that, on the contrary, any such idea has been specifically and pointedly disclaimed, recently by the formal, and, in some instances, public resolutions of the Societies in London, and many of those in the country, and repeatedly, and from an early period, in the private correspondence, either of the Societies or of their leading members. It has been expressly laid down, that more effectual means than petitions must be tried. The express object stated in the resolutions for calling the proposed General Convention of the people, or general meeting of the Friends of Liberty (under whichever of those names it is to be described), was to consider of the means of obtaining a full and equal representation, not of the thing to be obtained, but of the *means of obtaining* it, and this subsequent to the declarations last mentioned, that more effectual means than petitions must be tried. These more effectual *means* could, in the very nature of the thing, consist of but one of two possible alternatives, either introducing this change in the frame of one branch of the legislature, by some other authority than that of the legislature itself; or bringing that legislature, either by force or intimidation, against its will, to lend its authority to that purpose.

Accordingly the mildest terms in which, for a long time, the parties to this measure have described the mode by which they expected to attain their ends, have pointed at so extending and diffus-

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ing these Societies, and establishing such an union and concert among them, as might spread their principles and opinions through every part of the country, and produce a declaration of the collective sense of the people, in such a manner, as to overcome all resistance.

But on many other occasions, and more openly of late, the language adopted has pointed more distinctly at the use of open force; at the specific object of actually assembling a pretended National Convention; at the necessity of preparing *courageously* for the STRUGGLE, which they must expect, before those who were adverse to their measures would yield to them; and at obtaining the redress which they profess to seek, not from Parliament, or from the Executive Government, but FROM THEMSELVES, and from THEIR OWN STRENGTH AND VALOUR, from their own laws, and not from the laws of those whom they term their plunderers, enemies, and oppressors: And when the language to this effect repeatedly and deliberately used on so many occasions, and in so many quarters, is combined with the means lately employed for providing an armed force, and with the other projects of violence and open attack on different branches of the existing authority, which have appeared to be in the contemplation of some of the parties in these measures, it is impossible not to conclude, that it was by such means, by their own strength and numbers, by open force, defying and either overawing or superseding the authority of the legislature, that (in the extravagance of their imagination) they had formed the hope of accomplishing their daring and desperate designs.

But, extravagant and enormous as this project is, even on this statement, it appears to your Committee to be by no means confined even within these limits. The attempt to obtain a change in one branch of the legislature by force or terror, against the will of the whole, does indeed of itself include, if successful, at least a temporary suspension of all the existing powers of Government, and could hardly be supposed to stop short of an entire destruction of the constitution. But from the whole tenor of the system which has been acted upon, it is apparent that this was not merely the possible or probable consequence of such an attempt, but that the principles on which it was founded, and the mode by which it was attempted to be executed, obviously and necessarily tended to such a result. The principles on which the supposed right of universal suffrage was founded, were not such as led merely to the single act of altering to that extent, the frame of the House of Commons, and afterwards leaving the House of Commons, thus modelled, in possession, together with the Crown and the House of Lords, of their former legislative authority, or the Crown in possession of its former executive power; but, while they led to an alteration in the frame of the House of Commons, they equally led, if carried to their natural extent, to the extinction and destruction of the other two branches of the legislature.

A proposition so extravagant may at first be difficult to be credited; but it appears to the Committee to be distinctly proved, from an examination of the nature of the principles themselves;
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from a consideration of the system as actually carried into effect in France, and proposed as a model by those who were the chief actors in these proceedings in this country; and, by repeated declarations or acts, which either directly or by necessary inference point at the destruction of hereditary monarchy, hereditary nobility, and every distinction of orders and ranks in society.

YOUR COMMITTEE have stated to the House, in their former Report, that subsequent to the steps taken for the apprehension of the persons suspected of being concerned in the design which has been the subject of this Report, strong indications had appeared of a disposition to concert the means of resisting such measures as might be adopted for preventing the accomplishment of the design itself, or for bringing the authors or abettors of it to punishment.

It appears to your Committee, that immediately after the apprehension of several of the leading members of the London Corresponding Society, a Committee was appointed, under the title of a Committee of Emergency, for the express purpose of counteracting the steps which had been taken by the Executive Government to check the further progress of the system which has been detailed in this Report. It also appears that it has been made matter of deliberation, in the divisions of the London Corresponding Society, whether in the present exigency they should proceed to address the King, to petition Parliament, or to make an appeal to the nation at large: The latter proposition was adopted; and, in consequence of that decision, a paper has been printed and published under the name of the London Corresponding Society, and which your Committee has every reason to believe to be authentic: This paper contains the following passages; viz. 'That we intended to call a Convention is a truth, which needed neither general warrants, armed messengers, or secret committees to discover, since it was accompanied by a resolution, to make that intention known, by 200,000 printed copies of that day's proceedings. But the purport ascribed to that Convention, viz. the assuming legislative power, is a groundless falsehood: The sole intent was to devise means of attaining a complete representative body, on the principles of universal suffrage, equal personal representation, and annual election; and whenever, or however, such a body can be obtained, it will not be in the power of all the placemen and pensioners in *St. Stephen's Chapel* to dispute its legislative authority. We are aware that in these times of constitutional bigotry, the last sentence may sound unpleasantly to many, who do not deserve to be considered as enemies to liberty: We therefore wish it to be clearly understood, that we speak of a representative body of the whole nation, and not of any particular part or description of men; and as the divine right of kings is not at this time directly asserted (at least in this country) by any, but the most extremely ignorant, we think it ought to follow, as a natural consequence, that the people are the only legitimate source of authority: And it appears to us that the vain attempt to draw a medium between these opinions has produced endless

‘ absurdities and contradictions, to the disgrace of our records and law books. Among these the most conspicuous is called, *The Abdication of James the Second*, which phrase (coined for the purpose) may be either understood to mean *his expulsion by popular authority, or his voluntary resignation*; if the former, it *sanctions the doctrine which we have advanced*; if the latter, we scruple not to call it a national lie. To the honour of Scotland, their Parliament explicitly declared him banished *by authority of the people*. But, citizens, *let us explain the truth*: The expulsion of James the Second, and the establishment of William the Third, though doubtless agreeable to the general wishes of the people, was not *in point of form an act of the people*. It was the act of a number of persons calling themselves a Convention, but not regularly authorised by popular delegation, and consequently falling under the description of a *faction*; and this not merely in *theory* but in *fact*, for their unwillingness to acknowledge the *rightful power of the people* was the reason of their adopting the inexplicable phrase above mentioned.

‘ The providing arms is another charge, on which we wish to speak with caution; lest in asserting, which we do, *that it is totally false*, we should be understood to admit that if it had been true, it would have proved criminality.

‘ We freely acknowledge, that some of our members have *applied themselves to the knowledge of arms*; and, far from desiring to make a secret of this circumstance, we wish their example was *followed by the whole nation*. We then need not fear invasion, either from Frenchmen, Hessians, or Hanoverians: Nor should we easily be alarmed by the mock discovery of plots, which never existed.

‘ We are perfectly convinced of the propriety of our opinions *respecting the rights of the people to have arms, and to regulate their constitution*.

‘ It may be expected that we should not conclude without exhorting the associated friends of freedom to an *active perseverance in the object of their associations*, but, judging from the conduct of our own members, we are happy in declaring that we think no such exhortation necessary.’

From these passages it appears, that since the apprehension of their leading members, and the measures which have been lately taken in Parliament on the subject of their designs, the London Corresponding Society have openly avowed their intention to call a Convention, for the purpose of *devising means* to attain a complete representative body, on the principles of annual election and of universal suffrage, without any reference whatever to Parliament, and (as far as can be collected from their own interpretation of the phrases which they have used to describe the House of Commons) with the further intention of arrogating to the body constituted according to the manner to be prescribed by such a Convention, the whole legislative authority of the nation.

It appears also that the London Corresponding Society admit that some of their members have applied themselves to the knowledge of arms; and although they deny having provided arms, they desire
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not to be understood as admitting that if it had been true it would have proved criminality; and they assert the propriety of their opinion respecting the rights of the people to have arms, and to regulate their constitution.

And this open avowal of the design of calling a Convention, and of the fact of having applied themselves to the use of arms, is accompanied with a declaration of their determined purpose to persevere, with activity, in the objects of their association; objects which have been already sufficiently explained to the House by reference to the acts of the Society, and to the professed principles of its leading members.

If the circumstances which have been stated in this Report appear to the House in the same view in which, on the most attentive consideration, they have appeared to your Committee, it is scarcely necessary to state any collateral matter in order to satisfy the House how much the peace, safety, and happiness of the country must have been affected by the further progress of the measures which have been stated.

But if any thing were wanting to add to this impression; it would arise from the recollection, that the incitement to internal commotions in other countries is the most distinguishing feature, both of the declared principles and of the uniform practice of France under their present system, and that in the public acts of those exercising the powers of government in that country, an intention of invading these kingdoms, founded on the idea of receiving support and assistance within the country, has been openly avowed. The case does not, however, rest here.—It has come under the observation of your Committee, that recent measures have been actually taken by the ruling powers in France for endeavouring to ascertain, both in Great Britain and Ireland, the degree of co-operation and assistance which they might expect in any attempt of this nature.

This communication does not appear, from any evidence before the Committee, to have any immediate connexion with the Societies, whose proceedings have been the subject of this Report; but the connexion with their general objects is sufficiently evident, both from the nature of the thing, and from the particulars which have been stated in the course of the Report.

It is not immaterial to add, that in Ireland these communications appear to have been directly addressed to a person acting in concert with the Societies here, one of their honorary members, and who has taken an active part in the course of the proceedings to which your Committee have referred.

YOUR COMMITTEE have, for obvious reasons, omitted to annex to their Report the evidence of particular witnesses, by whom the facts above stated are supported; and, for the same reasons, they have studiously forbore to mention the names of persons and places, in all cases in which they could be omitted with a proper attention to the general object of their inquiry, and to the information which the House has a right to expect upon so important a subject.

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A P P E N D I X

TO THE

SECOND REPORT

FROM THE

COMMITTEE OF SECRECY,

OF THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

APPENDIX, A. (No. 1.)

PAPER distributed amongst the Fencibles.

FRIENDS AND BRETHREN,

IT is with the greatest pleasure that your countrymen are informed, That such is your attachment and love to *them*, and to your native country, that you manfully and firmly resolve not to leave it upon any terms contrary to those upon which you were at first engaged. Your countrymen love you, and their hearts would be as much wounded to part with *you*, as *your's* would be to be separated from *them*. They well know that they are safe under the protection of their *fathers*, their *sons*, their *brothers* in arms, and they neither wish nor desire any other defenders. They hope and believe that your hearts are filled with the same sentiments.

The great mass of the People from amongst whom you have been enlisted, have been represented to you as your enemies.—Believe not the assertion. They have been taught to consider *you* as foes; but they do not fear finding friends amongst their brethren.

Their cause and yours is the same:—They are poor, but they have honest hearts; hearts which sympathize in *your* cause; they look for the same friendship and the same sympathy in *you*.

They rejoice to hear, That you are becoming daily more convinced of the great truth, that the law ought to be the same to the *Highlander* and to the *Lowlander*, to the rich and to the *poor*,
 VOL. IV. and

and that no man can be *compelled* to take up arms, by *any authority whatsoever*, unless *his own inclinations prompt him to do so*.

This truth has been hitherto carefully concealed from you, but it is not the less certain.—The will of your *laird*, cannot without your own consent, separate you from your families and friends, although many of you may have experienced the exertions of such a power, however unjust, and however contrary to law.

We respect and admire that principle which induces you, (though necessity has compelled you to take up arms) still to persist in remaining to defend your friends at home, and not to quit a country which holds pledged so dear.

When You are gone, where is their defence.—They may be either left *without protection*, or may soon see their country overrun by Foreign Troops, such as in time past have already shed the blood of your ancestors without provocation and without remorse, and who would feel perhaps as little compunction in shedding *theirs*.

Prepared for every deed of horror, these foreign mercenaries may *violate the chastity* of your Wives, your Sisters, and your Daughters, and when *desire* is satiated *crudely* may resume its place in their hearts, as experience has too well and too fatally shewn, and Friends, Parents, Children, and Brothers, may be involved in one common slaughter.

The cruel massacre of Glencoe cannot yet be forgotten; are there not amongst you, whose forefathers perished *there*?—Their hearts throbbing with kindness and hospitality were pierced with the daggers of their treacherous guests, and the feast prepared by the hand of unsuspecting friendship, was closed with a scene of blood!—Such is the return for kindness and hospitality!—Such the protection which your families have to expect—!!!

How will they then look around in vain for *your* protecting care, when perhaps you are fighting at a distance in a foreign land? But they hope you will not forsake them.—Stay, oh stay, and defend your families and your friends!

For that purpose alone you were enlisted.—They are ready to come forward for *you* in the vindication of *your Rights*.

Thousands join in the same sentiments with *you* and ardently wish for your continuance amongst them. The circumstances which might require you to quit your country *have not yet taken place*.—No invasion has yet happened—You cannot be *compelled* to go—Leave not your country—Assert your independence—Your countrymen will look up to *you* as their *protectors* and *guardians*, and will in *their* turn lift up their arms to protect and assist You.—

Dundee, April 12th, 1794.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A. (No. 2.)

To the Landholders of the County of Perth.

Gentlemen,

Observing an advertisement in the Edinburgh news-paper requiring you to meet here on the 11th current, to take into consideration a plan of the Executive Government for the internal defence of the country, we, a number of the inhabitants of Perth and neighbourhood, consisting of upwards of three hundred effective men, deeply impressed with the dangers which threaten the nation, and animated with that patriotism which proclaims to the world that the safety of the people is the supreme law, make a voluntary offer of our services to assist in protecting the liberties of the people from any incroachments, either from hostile invaders, or more dangerous internal foes, pledging ourselves on the one hand to resist every attempt to invade private property, and on the other, to crush and subdue every unlawful combination of the rich against the poor; and being sensible that the protection of the People's Liberties is a trust of such importance, that it ought to be committed to those only who are capable of discerning the eternal laws of justice, and of feeling and acting according to the force of principle, we pledge ourselves that none but true men, answering to this description, shall be allowed to enter our band; because, independent of the palpable absurdity of committing our defence to criminals, we disdain the mean shift of crimping, and sweeping prisons.

It is on the foregoing principles that we offer our services to the country, on the following terms, as a body of infantry troops.

First, We consider these principles as the best security for preserving order; and as military law must be very disagreeable, and is wholly unnecessary to men of our peaceful habits of life, we therefore require that every offence shall be tried by a jury chosen from among ourselves.

Second, As we are for the most part settled in business, or have families of our own, we must therefore expressly stipulate, that unless an invasion shall take place in a neighbouring part of the country, we shall not be carried out of the county without our own consent, declared by a council chosen by ourselves, and held for that purpose.

Third, We require to have the sole power of choosing our own officers from among ourselves, and of cashiering, and placing them in the ranks, at every month's end, if necessary.

Fourth, We require that the county, or government, shall furnish us with arms and military stores, together with every other equipment necessary for the purposes of defence.

On the other hand, we engage to find serjeants in our own body, qualified to train and discipline the men, and shall require no pay, unless called out to actual service.

This plan we consider as greatly preferable to that of raising troops

troops of cavalry as proposed in some counties for the following reasons:

First, That the horses being taken from the purposes of agriculture, must be very hurtful to the country.

Second, Cavalry are extremely expensive; and in addition to the present enormous burden of foreign troops, together with our own, will fall heavy on government.

Third, They will require six or nine months to train them; whereas we engage to be ready in four weeks from the time we are embodied, for actual service.

Fourth, Without an adequate body of infantry, cavalry are wholly incapable to repel an invasion, and are only fit for pursuing a flying enemy, or running down an unarmed multitude.

Fifth, We engage, when properly trained, to beat off double our own number of the best cavalry that can be brought against us.

We also promise to double or triple our number, upon a day's notice been given, if thought necessary.

The committee are instructed, by a general meeting of the volunteers, to adhere to their former principles, which are exactly the same as presented to the general of the landholders.

(Signed) Robert Henderson, Shoemaker.

Matthew Calderwood, do.

John Johnston, Weaver.

David Smith, do.

James Haksfoun, do.

Robert Sands, do.

Andrew Pitkethly, Shoemaker.

(C O P Y.)

Minutes of General Meeting, 11 April, 1794.

The preses produced a letter which had been handed to him, signed by Robert Henderson, Robert Sands, Matthew Calderwood, David Smith, Andrew Pitkethly, and Thomas Smith, relative to an offer of their services, and of others who had previously presented an unsigned petition to the meeting (but which had been withdrawn) for the internal defence of the country: which letter being read, the meeting remit to the Committee appointed for carrying into execution the resolutions of this Meeting, relative to the raising of two or more troops of fencible cavalry for the internal defence of the County.

Copy Letter referred to in Minutes of 11 April, 1794.

To the President of the Meeting of Landholders of the County of Perth, presently assembled in the Sheriff Court Room.

President,

We sent in a number of proposals into court to be presented by Colonel Erskine, which we understand are thrown out because they have no signatures affixed: We are deputed by these persons, who offer their services, and are ready to appear in open court to give every satisfaction respecting the matter; we therefore request
that

that you will bring forward the proposals, and we shall be ready to wait on you when called upon. President, we are yours. (Signed) Robert Henderson, Robert Sands, Matthew Calderwood, David Smith, Andrew Pitkethly, Thomas Smith.

P. S. The deputation is in Mr. Murray's, at the back of the jail.

Half past five o'clock, P. M.

Minutes of Committee, 12th April, 1794.

The Committee having examined the letter which was referred to their consideration by the General Meeting yesterday, which letter has a reference to a previous petition presented to the meeting of yesterday, but afterwards withdrawn, they find it impossible to deliberate on that subject at present, neither having the original petition, nor any plan respecting the mode of internal defence pointed out by the petitioners before them; they therefore desire Mr. Paton to deliver a copy of this sixth Resolution of the Committee to the petitioners, so as they may transmit their original petition, and may communicate any plan which they have to offer relative to the internal defence of the country, which will be paid due attention to by the Committee at their next meeting.

(COPY.)

Minutes of Committee, 25 April, 1794.

The Committee again considered the Letter signed by six persons, and received the original petition there referred to, with an addition since made to it, and the subscription of seven individuals adhibited thereto; and were informed by these persons that the resolutions contained in the original petition were agreed to at a meeting, called by means of a printed hand-bill pasted up in the streets of Perth, and held on the North Inch last Wednesday evening; at which meeting they were also informed, that the same persons resolved on presenting a petition to his Majesty in behalf of Muir, Gerald, and the other persons who have lately been sentenced to be transported for the crime of Sedition; the Committee are of opinion that zeal displayed by individuals, in offering their services to defend their country against the unjust aggression of the cruel and rapacious foreign enemies we are now engaged in war with, is commendable in them as British subjects, warmly attached to their king, and to our glorious and happy Constitution: But, after considering the plan suggested, they are of opinion that it is liable to such objections that they cannot give it any countenance or support; but they beg to recommend to those individuals now tendering their services for the purposes of repelling the meditated attacks of the inhuman, ferocious, and irreligious rulers of that unhappy and devoted country, France, either to make an offer of their services individually to the officers of the Perthshire Fencible Cavalry, or, if they prefer being in a corps of infantry, to enlist into some of the regiments of foot now raising. They also beg

to inform the individuals who have thus professed their attachment to the county, that it will be expected they will use their best endeavours, by avoiding all tumultuous meetings, to preserve good order in the town of Perth and its vicinity.

APPENDIX B. (No. 1.)

Secret London Corresponding Society, to Norwich Constitutional Society.

Fellow Citizens,

London, 17th Oct. 1793.

WE have to acknowledge at once, your favours of the 3d September, and 14th instant. Multiplicity of business prevented my answering your first; but will now inform you that the spirit shewn in it gave great satisfaction to our society at large. The rejoicings for the capture of Valenciennes were not confined to Norwich alone. The ignorant every where else throughout the nation betrayed their imbecility on the occasion. The taking of a town, the slaughtering of thousands of human beings, the laying waste whole provinces, or the enslaving a nation (however great evils they may be) can only retard for a small space the time the progress of truth and reason:—Be not disheartened, therefore—pursue your plan, instruct mankind, and constitutionally set your faces against existing abuses: Be assured that many are our friends, *who only wait a favourable opportunity to openly join us*, while our enemies have much enfeebled themselves and their cause by their arbitrary exertions. Despotism is at its last gasp—One or two campaigns more will terminate its existence.

We are glad to see that you begin to make a proper use of delegation: Where bodies of men are too numerous to be convened easily on every occasion, delegation is the best, and indeed only way to obtain the general opinion. Scotland, improving on the idea, have not only summoned their own delegates, but also invite those of every other society to attend a kind of convention, which is to be held at Edinburgh on the 29th instant. The inclosed paper, which I, previous to the communicating your letter to our Committee (which will meet only to-morrow) make haste to transmit to you, will shew you that your society is included in the general invitation to send delegates to that meeting—which we exhort you to do, if you possibly can.—I firmly believe our society will not miss the opportunity of doing the same.

We have just published a new edition of *The Englishman's Rights*, or, *A Dialogue between a Barrister and a Jurymen*, being an excellent work, published first by Sir John Hawles, Knight, Solicitor General to King William the Third. It is a book that ought to be in possession of every one, as it contains the *Rights and Duties of a Jurymen*—Send us word if you can vend a certain number of them in your neighbourhood—we

sell

sell them only three shillings per dozen, but the retail price is four pence a-piece. I am most sincerely, my fellow citizens, and brethren in a good cause, your humble servant.

APPENDIX B. (No. 2.)

Copy of a Letter from the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society to Norwich.

Fellow Citizens,

London, January 11, 1794.

I HAVE just received a letter from Citizen Margarot, at Edinburgh, with some of the Edinburgh Gazetteers, where you will see that Citizen Skirving is found guilty, and sentenced for fourteen years transportation to Botany Bay. Margarot's trial comes next; he meets it with great firmness and resolution. I have no time to make my comments on the proceedings, but I think our opponents are cutting their own throats as fast as they can.—Now is the time for us to do something worthy of *Men*. The brave defenders of Liberty, South of the English Channel are performing wonders, driving their enemies before them like chaff before the whirlwind. Margarot tells me, that he has not time to write to you just now, but he hopes to have time very soon, when his trial is over, and immured in a prison. The London Corresponding Society is to have a General Meeting and an Anniversary Dinner, on Monday the 20th instant, at the Globe Tavern, Strand. I have sent you some of Margarot's and Skirving's indictment, with two copies of a pamphlet on brewing—he is a member of our society, the author; if you approve of it, you may put it in pretice, and be a great saving to many families, also a diminution of the revenue, for every one brewing their own beer pay no duty for it. Excuse haste. I still remain, &c.

(Signed) _____

APPENDIX B. (No. 3.)

Copy of a Letter from Mr. Margarot to the Norwich United Societies.

Spithead, the 10th of March, 1794.

Worthy Friends, and Fellow Citizens,

OUR stay here being longer than was at first expected, I avail myself of that delay to acknowledge the receipt of twenty pounds from your society, which have been delivered to me by Thomas Hardy, our secretary, to whom you had remitted them, and who has been down here purposely to see me, and make some arrangements for the future, but whose business has called him back to London before any thing could be settled between us.—At first he seemed to think that the money was meant by you to be divided among the four who are now suffering together; but, on my acquainting him that those gentlemen were infinitely better off than myself in that respect, inasmuch that they are continually receiving private presents, and are moreover supported by many Noblemen and rich Members of Parliament, these latter
seeking

seeking only (I much fear) to make a party affair of it, that he gave the money to my own disposal. If, however, you meant otherwise, your intention shall be complied with immediately on its being made known to me.—So much for pecuniary affairs.—*This morning 10 ships of war have left Spithead for the Channel, and it is here reported that the Brest fleet is out: Rumour, always magnifying things, says there are 70 sail of French at sea; if so, there must be a number of transports among them, and a descent may probably be the consequence.—For God's sake, my worthy friends, do not relax in the Cause of Freedom—Continue as you have begun—Consolidate your own societies—Unite with others—Persevere, and make no doubt but sooner or later your endeavours will be crowned with success.* I have also to thank you for the affectionate address I received from you. Be assured that my utmost ambition will ever be to deserve your confidence and your esteem. The present tide of fortune, however strongly it may run against our cause at present, must soon have a turn: The eyes of mankind will naturally open—when their pockets empty, and their blood spills, they will ask each other, for whom are we thus sacrificing ourselves, and murdering others? What advantage results to us from all this expenditure and slaughter? And by interfering in the government of another country, and to model it as they think proper? Should they do so, Popery and despotism must be our lot—May Gracious Providence avert it; may we rather all to a man be determined to live free or die! In my exile nothing would afflict me so much as to hear that my country was enslaved, and that my countrymen hugged their chains. I trust however the national spirit of Britons will prevent it. Adieu, my dear friends; and ever remember

Your faithful

M. MARGAROT.

P. S. This day a mock debate concerning our Sentence is to take place in P——.

APPENDIX C.

Extracts from the Book containing the Proceedings of the Constitutional Society.

AT a meeting held at the Secretary's, Took's-Court, Chancery-lane, Friday 23d March, 1791.

Resolved, That the thanks of this society be given to Mr. Thomas Paine, for his most masterly book, intituled "The Rights of Man," in which not only the malevolent sophistries of hireling scribblers are detected and exposed to merited ridicule, but many of the most important and beneficial political truths are stated, so irresistibly convincing as to promise the acceleration of that not very distant period when usurping Borough Sellers, and profligate Borough Buyers, shall be deprived of what they impudently dare to call their property—the choice of the representatives of the people.

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The Constitutional Society cannot help expressing their satisfaction that so valuable a publication has proceeded from a member of that society; and they sincerely hope that the people of England will give that attention to the subjects discussed in Mr. Paine's treatise, which their manifest importance so justly deserve.

Resolved, That the foregoing resolutions, and all future proceedings of this society, be regularly transmitted by the Secretary to all our corresponding Constitutional Societies in England, Scotland, and France.

Resolved, That the above resolutions be published in the papers.

At a Meeting, April 1st, 1791.

Resolved, That the resolutions of this society, recommending Paine's book, "The Rights of Man," and published in several of the papers, be re-published in the following, viz. General Evening, Morning Post, World, English Chronicle, Sherborne, Leeds, York, Bristol, Nottingham, and Birmingham.

At a Meeting, July 22, 1791.

Resolved, That the original and translation of an address communicated by the Reverend Doctor Towers, from the society at Nantz, be entered on the books of this society.

The translation is entered.

At a Meeting, March 4th, 1792.

Read the following letter from the Revolution Society at Norwich, to the London Society for Constitutional Information.

The Norwich Revolution Society wishes to open a Communication with you at this time, when corruption has acquired a publicity in the senate, which exacts from the honour of the British nation renewed exertions for Parliamentary Reform.—Without prejudging the probable event of such an application to the legislature, this society is willing to circulate the information, and to co-operate in the measures that may seem best adapted to further so desirable and so important an end. The society is willing to hope the redress of every existing grievance at the hands of a government resulting from an extraordinary convocation in 1688, of all who had, at any preceding time, been elected representatives of the people, assisted by the hereditary counsellors of the nation, and a peculiar deputation from the metropolis; which National Constituting Assembly cashiered for misconduct a king of the house of Stuart. The opinions and principles of this society are best explained by an appeal to their literary representatives. To James Mackintosh, author of *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*, this society offers the tribute of its approbation and gratitude, for the knowledge, the eloquence, and philosophical spirit with which he has explained, defended, and commented on the revolution of France. It hesitates to assent to this only of his Opinions, that "there are but two interests in society, those of the rich and those of the poor." If so, what chance have the latter?

Surely the interests of all the industrious, from the richest merchant to the poorest mechanic, are in every community the same—to lessen the numbers of the unproductive, to whose maintenance they contribute, and to do away such institutions and imposts as abridge the means of maintenance, by resisting the demand for labour, or by sharing its reward: as the means most conducive to this comprehensive end, the Norwich Revolution Society desires an equitable Representation of the People.

The Rights of Man, by Thomas Paine, and the Advice to the Privileged Orders, by Joel Barlow, have also been read with attention, and circulated with avidity. They point out with clearness most of the abuses which have accumulated under the British government, they attack with energy most of the prejudices which have tended to perpetuate them.

Internally our society is thus organized: Any person proposed and seconded by a member, is received, on paying an admission fine, and obliging himself to an annual contribution towards the purchase of books for the use of the society, and for circulation among the confederated clubs. The members assemble twice, monthly. A committee of correspondence is periodically elected by ballot, to select books, and to conduct the other literary business. A committee of twelve is periodically named by acclamation, to attend severally the meetings of the various confederated clubs, which are invited in like manner to depute a member to the monthly meetings of this.

The clubs are now seven in number, and more are expected to announce their adherence. The Norwich Revolution Society, proposing to extend this form of combination, recommends for admission into the London Society for Constitutional Information twelve persons.

Norwich, April 26, 1792.

At a Meeting, March 16th, 1792.

The Chairman of the Society for Constitutional Information, established at Manchester, having communicated to this society their resolutions of thanks to Thomas Paine, for the publication of his "Second Part of the Rights of Man; combining Principle and Practice."

Bull's Head Inn, Manchester, March 13, 1792.

At a Meeting of the Manchester Constitutional Society, held this day, it was unanimously resolved,

That the thanks of this society are due to Mr. Thomas Paine, for the publication of his "Second Part of the Rights of Man; combining Principle and Practice," a work of the highest importance to every nation under heaven, but particularly to this, as containing excellent and practicable plans for an immediate and considerable reduction of the public expenditure; for the prevention of wars for the extension of our manufactures and commerce; for the education of the young; for the comfortable support of the aged; for the better maintenance of the poor of every description; and finally, for lessening greatly, and without delay, the enormous load of taxes under which this country at present labours.

That

That this society congratulate their country at large on the influence which Mr. Paine's publications appear to have had in procuring the repeal of some oppressive taxes in the present Session of Parliament; and they hope that this adoption of a small part of Mr. Paine's ideas *will be followed by the most strenuous exertions to accomplish a complete Reform in the present inadequate State of the Representation of the People*; and that the other great plans of public benefit which Mr. Paine has so powerfully recommended will be speedily carried into effect.

Signed _____ President.

_____ Secretary.

Ordered, That the Secretary return to the Chairman of the society at Manchester, the thanks of this society, for his communication; at the same time assuring him that this society does heartily concur in the above resolution.

Resolved, That the above resolutions be published in the papers.

At a Meeting, March 23d, 1792.

Resolved, That the following be published in the Morning Chronicle, World, Post, Times, Argus, English Chronicle, and General Evening.

"Society for Constitutional Information, London, March 23d, 1792. This society having received the following and other communications from Sheffield;" viz.

Sheffield.

Society for Constitutional Information, [14 March, 1792.]

This society, composed chiefly of the manufacturers of Sheffield, began about four months ago, and is already increased to nearly Two Thousand Members, and is daily increasing, exclusive of the adjacent towns and villages, who are forming themselves into similar societies.

Considering, as we do, that the want of knowledge and information in the general mass of the people has exposed them to numberless impositions and abuses, the exertions of this society are directed to the acquirement of useful knowledge, and to spread the same as far as our endeavours and abilities can extend.

We declare that we have derived more true knowledge from the two works of Mr. Thomas Paine, intituled "Rights of Man," Part the first and Second, than from any other author or subject. *The Practice as well as the Principle of Government is laid down in those works, in a manner so clear, and irresistibly convincing,* that this society do hereby resolve to give their thanks to Mr. Paine for his two said publications, intituled "Rights of Man," Parts 1st and 2d. Also,

Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of this society be given to Mr. Paine, for the affectionate concern he has shewn in his second work in behalf of the poor, the infant, and the aged; who, notwithstanding the opulence which blesses other parts of the community, are, by the grievous weight of taxes, rendered the miserable victims of poverty and wretchedness.

Resolved unanimously, That this society, disdaining to be considered either of a ministerial or opposition party (names of

which we are tired, having been so often deceived by both) do ardently recommend it to all their fellow citizens, into whose hands these resolutions may come, to confer seriously and calmly with each other on the subject alluded to, and to manifest to the world that the spirit of true liberty is a spirit of order; and that to obtain justice it is consistent that we be just ourselves.

Resolved unanimously, That these resolutions be printed, and that a copy thereof be transmitted to the society for Constitutional Information in London; requesting their approbation for twelve of our friends to be entered into their society, for the purpose of establishing a connection and a regular communication with that, and all other similar societies in the kingdom.

By Order of the Committee.

(Signed) ———

Chairman.

" Ordered, That the Secretary do return the thanks of this society to the Society for Constitutional Information established at Sheffield; and that he express to them with what friendship and affection this society embraces them as brothers and fellow labourers in the same cause. That he do assure them of our infinite concurrence with their opinion, viz. That the people of this country are not, as Mr. Burke terms them, *Savine*; but rational beings, better qualified to separate truth from error than himself, possessing more honesty, and less craft.

" Resolved, That this society will, on Friday next, March 3rd, ballot for the twelve associated members, recommended by the Sheffield committee, and approved at this meeting."

(Signed) ———

Chairman.

At a Meeting, March 30th, 1792.

The twelve gentlemen recommended by the Sheffield Society, were unanimously elected.

Read a letter, with enclosed resolutions, from the Secretary to the Corresponding Society, London.

" London Corresponding Society.

" Resolved, That every individual has a right to share in the Government of that society of which he is a member, unless incapacitated.

" Resolved, That nothing but non-age, a privation of reason, or an offence against the general rules of society can incapacitate him.

" Resolved, That it is no less the right than the duty of every citizen to keep a watchful eye on the government of his country, that the laws by being multiplied do not degenerate into oppression; and that those who are intrusted with the government do not substitute private interest for public advantage.

" Resolved, That the people of Great Britain are not properly represented in Parliament.

" Resolved, That in consequence of a partial, unequal, and inadequate representation, together with the corrupt method in which representatives are elected, oppressive taxes, unjust laws, restrictions

restrictions of liberty, and wasting of the public money, have ensued.

"Resolved, That the only remedy to those evils is a fair and impartial representation of the people in Parliament.

"Resolved, That a fair and impartial representation can never take place until partial privileges are abolished; and the strong temptations held out to electors affords a presumptive proof that the representatives of this country seldom procure a seat in Parliament from the unbought suffrages of a free people.

"Resolved, that this society do express their abhorrence of tumult and violence; and that, as they aim at reform, not anarchy, reason, firmness, and unanimity be the only arms they employ, or persuade their fellow citizens to exert against abuse of power.

"Ordered, That the secretary of this society do communicate the foregoing to the Societies for Constitutional Information established in London, Manchester, and Sheffield.

"By Order of the Committee

(Signed) _____

Secretary."

"Resolved, That the Secretary of this society do express to the Corresponding Society the extreme satisfaction which we have received by the above communication; and to assure them of our desire to continue to correspond and co-operate with them for the purpose of obtaining a fair representation of the people in Parliament."

At a Meeting, April 20, 1792.

A Declaration from a Society in Southwark was read; and, Resolved, That the thanks of the society be given to the Southwark Society, for the following communication, and that it be published in the papers.

At a Meeting at the Three Tuns Tavern, Southwark,

April 19th, 1792.

Resolved, That we do now form ourselves into a society for the diffusion of political knowledge.

Resolved, That the society be denominated the Friends of the People.

Resolved, That the following be the declaration of this society.

Extract from Declaration.

Considering that ignorance, forgetfulness, or contempt of the rights of men, are the sole causes of public grievances, and the corruption of government, this society, formed for the purpose of investigating and asserting those rights, and of uniting our efforts with others of our fellow citizens for correcting national abuses, and restraining unnecessary and exorbitant taxation, do hereby declare—

1st, That the great end of civil society is general happiness.

2dly, That no form of government is good any further than it secures that object.

3dly, That all civil and political authority is derived from the people.

4thly,

4thly, That equal active citizenship is the unalienable right of all men; minors, criminals, and insane persons excepted.

5thly, That the exercise of that right, in appointing an adequate representative government, is the wisest device of human policy, and the only security of national freedom.

Further Extract from same Paper.

We call upon our fellow citizens of all descriptions to institute societies for the same great purpose; and we recommend a general correspondence with each other, and with the Society for Constitutional Information at London, as the best means of cementing the common union, and of directing with greater energy our united efforts to the same common objects.

By Order of the Committee.

(Signed) — — —

At a Meeting, April 27, 1792.

Resolved, That every society desiring an union or correspondence with this, and which doth not profess any principles destructive to truth or justice, or subversive to the liberties of our country; but which on the contrary seeks, as we do, the removal of corruption from the legislature, and abuses from the government, ought to be, and we hope will be, embraced with the most brotherly affection and patriotic friendship by this society.

Read the following letter, addressed to the society called the Friends of the People associated for Constitutional Reform, assembled at Free Masons Tavern.

Sir,

By the Society for Constitutional Information, I am commanded to express to you the satisfaction that its members feel on the institution of your society.

That the House of Commons itself, which is the very subject to be reformed, should have furnished a part of this strength, may ultimately afford important advantages to the public. But it must not, Sir, be disguised, that at first this circumstance will necessarily be accompanied with doubts, with suspicions, with apprehensions. It is not, Sir, the first time that numbers of that house have professed themselves Reformers: It is not the first time that they have entered into popular associations. But should they, on this occasion, prove faithfully instrumental in effecting a substantial reform in the representation of the people, and the duration of Parliaments, it will be the first time that the nation hath not found itself in an error, when it placed confidence in associated Members of Parliament, for the recoveries of the constitutional and inestimable rights of the people. The long-lost rights of representation, are rights, Sir, which in truth are not to be recovered but by the exertions and the unanimity of the people themselves. Impressed with this great truth, it has been an invariable object of this society "to revive in the minds of the commonality at large a knowledge of their lost rights, respecting the election and duration of the representative body"—and we doubt not that your society will see the wisdom of pursuing a like course. May it taste the delight of diffusing this knowledge;

knowledge; may it reap the honour of calling forth the energies of the nation!

When this society, Sir, contemplates that flood of light and truth which, under a benign Providence, is now sweeping from the earth despotism in all its forms, and infringement of rights in all its degrees, to make way for freedom, justice, peace, and human happiness; and when it sees your society announce itself to the world as the Friends of the People; it rests assured that this new institution abundantly partakes of that light, that it embraces that truth, and it will act up to the sacredness of that friendship which it professes, by nobly casting from it, with disdain, all aristocratic reserves, and fairly and honestly contending for the people's rights in their full extent.

Here, Sir, be assured, lies all your strength. You may boast of names, of wealth, of talents, and even of principles; but without the fellowship of the people, understanding and feeling their immediate interest in the contest, your association, whenever it grapples with that powerful despotism to which it is opposed, and to which a constitutional cloak gives double strength, will most assuredly crumble to dust.

Here, Sir, it is with peculiar satisfaction that the Society for Constitutional Information can express its belief, that to its own unequivocal, "Declaration of Rights, without which no Englishman can be a Free Man, nor the English nation Free People," it owes that confidence, on the part of all true friends to a substantial Reform of Parliament, which in all periods of the society's existence it has invariably experienced.

This short declaration, containing no more than four distinct propositions, satisfied the people that the society assumed not the office of Reformer without knowing with precision what wanted Reform; nor the character of friend, without manifesting that sincerity which gave proof of its attachment. It left to such Reformers as Mr. Burke to talk of the People's Liberties, and at the same time to deny or explain away their Rights.

This Society, Sir, trusts that the purity of principle which actuated individual Members of Parliament, who joined the associations that have been spoken of, will in no degree be affected by the observations that have been made upon the insufficiency of those associations. But, convinced that a strong impression still remains upon the minds of the people, that in general persons who have long been accustomed to hold seats in the House of Commons under the present abuses in the representation, and whose connections are all aristocratic, must be almost more than men, at once and completely to sacrifice both prejudice and unwarranted power at the Altar of Freedom;—this society, convinced, I say, Sir, of the existence of this impression, would not suffer its delicacy to stand in the way of its duty on this important occasion; but determined, with the frankness belonging to sincere affection, to warn its new brethren against a danger to which they might otherwise become exposed through mere inadvertency.

That the distinguished persons who have adorned the senate, and now adorn your society, may be found equal to the sublime

lime efforts of virtue which their situation now demands, and may on that account receive the blessings of their country and of mankind to the latest posterity, is the sincere, the ardent wish of the Society for Constitutional Information! In whose name I have the honour to subscribe myself, with great regard.

Resolved, That the said letter be signed by the Chairman of this Meeting, and sent to the said society at their next general meeting.

At a Meeting, May 4, 1792.

Read Letter from the Revolution Societies at Norwich, as follows :

To the London Society for Constitutional Information.

The Norwich Revolution Society wishes to open a communication with you at this time, when corruption has acquired a publicity in the senate, which exacts from the honour of the British nation renewed exertions for Parliamentary Reform.—Without pre-judging the probable event of such an application to the legislature, this society is willing to circulate the information, and to co-operate in the measure that may seem best adapted to further so desirable and so important an end. It is willing to hope the redress of every existing grievance at the hands of a government resulting from an extraordinary convocation, in 1688, of all who had at any preceding time been elected representatives of the people, assisted by the hereditary counsellors of the nation, and a peculiar deputation from the metropolis, which National Constituting Assembly cashiered for misconduct a King of the House of Stuart.

The opinions and principles of this society are best explained by an appeal to their literary representatives. To James Macintosh, author of the *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*, this society offers the tribute of its *Approbation and Gratitude*, for the knowledge, the eloquence, and philosophical spirit with which he has explained, defended, and commended the Revolution of France. It hesitates to assent to this only of his opinions, that “there are but two interests in society, those of the rich and those of the poor.” If so, what chance have the latter? Surely the interests of all the industrious, from the richest merchant, to the poorest mechanic, are in every community the same—to lessen the numbers of the unproductive, to whose maintenance they contribute, and to do away such institutions and imposts as abridge the means of maintenance, by resisting the demand for labour, or by sharing its reward; as the means most conducive to this comprehensive end, the Norwich Revolution Society desires an equitable representation of the people.

The *Rights of Man*, by Thomas Paine, and The Advice to the Privileged Orders, by Joel Barlow, have also been read with attention, and circulated with avidity. They point out with clearness most of the abuses which have accumulated under the *British Government*; they attack with energy most of the prejudices which have tended to perpetuate them.

Internally, our society is thus organized:—Any person proposed and seconded by a member is received, on paying an admission

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mission fine, and obliging himself to an annual contribution toward the purchase of books for the use of the society, and for inculcation among the confederated clubs. The members assemble twice, monthly. A committee of correspondence is periodically elected by ballot, to select books, and to conduct the other literary business. A committee of twelve is periodically named by acclamation to attend severally the meetings of the various confederated clubs, which are invited in like manner to depute a member to the monthly meetings of this: these clubs are now seven in number; and more are expected to announce their adherence. The Norwich Revolution Society, proposing to extend this form of combination, recommends for admission into the London Society for Constitutional Information the following twelve persons:

Norwich,
April 26th, 1792.

_____ Chairman

At a Meeting, 11th of May 1792.

Resolved, That there be a communication from this society with the Society of the Friends of the Constitution at Paris, known by the name of The Jacobins.

Read the following Address from this society to the Society of Friends of the Constitution at Paris, called The Jacobins.

A D D R E S S.

Brothers, and fellow citizens of the world,

The cordial and affectionate reception with which you have honoured our worthy countrymen Mr. Thomas Cooper and Mr. James Watt, members of the Society of Manchester, and united with our society, has been communicated to us by the correspondence of those gentlemen.

In offering you our congratulations on the glorious Revolution which your nation has accomplished, we speak a language which only sincerity can dictate.

The formality of courts affords no example to us. To do our thoughts justice, we give to the heart the liberty it delights in, and hail you as brothers.

It is not among the least of the revolutions which time is unfolding to an astonished world, that two nations, nursed by some wretched craft in reciprocal hatred, should so suddenly break their common odious chain, and rush into amity.

The principle that can produce such an effect, is the offspring of no earthly court; and whilst it exhibits to us the expensive
Vol. IV. 9 iniquity

iniquity of former politics, it enables us, with bold felicity, to say, We have done with them!

In contemplating the political condition of nations, we cannot conceive a more diabolical system of government, than that which has hitherto been generally practised over the world: to feed the avarice and gratify the wickedness of ambition, the fraternity of the human race has been destroyed; as if the several nations of the earth had been created by rival Gods. Man has not considered man as the work of One Creator.

The political institutions under which he has lived have been counter to whatever religion he professed.

Instead of that universal benevolence which the morality of every known religion declares, he has been politically bred to consider his species as his natural enemy, and to describe virtues and vices by a geographical chart.

The principles we now declare are not peculiar to the society that addresses you; they are extending themselves, with accumulating force, through every part of our country, and derive strength from an union of causes, which no other principles admit.

The religious friend of man, of every denomination, records them as his own; they animate the lover of rational liberty; and they cherish the heart of the poor, now bending under an oppression of taxes, by a prospect of relief.

We have against us only that same enemy which is the enemy of justice in all countries—a herd of courtiers, fattening on the spoil of the public.

It would have given an additional triumph to our congratulations, if the equal rights of man (which are the foundation of your declaration of Rights) had been recognized by the governments around you, and tranquilly established in all: but if despotisms be still reserved, to exhibit, by conspiracy and combination, a further example of infamy to future ages, that power that disposes of events best knows the means of making that example finally beneficial to his creatures.

We have beheld your peaceable principles insulted by despotic ignorance: we have seen the right hand of fellowship, which you hold out to the world, rejected by those who riot on its plunder: we now behold you a nation provoked into defence; and we can see no mode of defence equal to that of establishing the general freedom of Europe.

In this best of causes we wish you success. Our hearts go with you; and in saying this, we believe we utter the voice of millions.

Resolved, That the above address be signed by the chairman, and that ——— be requested to transmit it, with all possible dispatch, to ——— at Paris.

Resolved, That the said address be read a second time at the next meeting, for publication.

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to meet the committees of the Southwark, London, and Westminster Societies of the

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the Friends of the People, to-morrow evening, at seven o'clock, at the White Hart Tavern in Holborn, and be empowered to co-operate with them in the publication of the four resolutions contained in the declaration heretofore published by this society.

At a Meeting, 18th May 1792.

The Address to the Jacobins ordered to be published.

Read the following Letter from Mr. Paine, acquainting the society that he is proceeding to bring out a cheap edition of the First and Second Parts of the Rights of Man.

Resolved, That this Society will contribute its utmost aid towards supporting the rights of the nation.

Sir,

London, May 18th, 1792.

The honourable patronage which the Society for Constitutional Information has repeatedly given to the works, intitled "Rights of Man," renders it incumbent on me to communicate to them whatever relates to the progress of those works.

A great number of letters, from various parts of the country, have come to me, expressing an earnest desire that the First and Second Parts of "Rights of Man" could be rendered more generally useful, by printing them in a cheaper manner than they have hitherto been: as those requests were from persons to whom the purchase at the present price was inconvenient, I took the proper means for complying with their request.

I am since informed that the ministry intend bringing a prosecution; and as a nation (as well the poor as the rich) has a right to know what any works are that are made the subject of a prosecution, the getting out a cheap edition is, I conceive, rendered more necessary than before, as a means towards supporting that right;—and I have the pleasure of informing the society that I am proceeding with the work.

I am, &c.

THOMAS PAINE.

To the Chairman of the Society for Constitutional Information.

The society took into consideration the contents of the aforesaid letter, and came to the following Resolutions:

Resolved, That the thanks of this society be given to Mr. Thomas Paine, for the communication he has made, and for the patriotic disinterestedness manifested therein.

Resolved, That this society will contribute its utmost aid towards supporting the rights of the nation, and the freedom of the press, and him who has so essentially and successfully contributed to both.

Resolved, That the right of investigating principles and systems of government is one of these rights; and that the works of any author, which cannot be refuted by reason, cannot, on the principles of good government or of common sense, be made the subject of a prosecution.

Resolved, That the excessive taxes which this country pays, being now seventeen millions annually, give an additional motive for the exercise of this right, and render it at the same time

a more immediate duty the nation owes to itself, to enter upon and promote all such investigations.

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to enquire into the rumour of the above-mentioned prosecution; and to report thereon to the society at its next meeting.

Resolved, That a copy of Mr. Paine's Letter, together with these resolutions, be transmitted to all the associated societies in town and country; and that this society do congratulate them on the firm and orderly spirit, and tranquil perseverance, manifested in all their proceedings, and exhort them to a steady continuance therein.

Resolved, That 3,000 copies of the above Letter and Resolutions be printed, for the use of this society.

At a Meeting, 25th May 1792.

Resolved, That 6,000 more copies of the bills directed at the last meeting be printed: that 100 be sent to each of the twelve associated members of the Sheffield Constitutional Societies; 100 to each of the twelve associated members of the Norwich Constitutional Society; 200 to each of the other societies corresponding with this society; 200 to Derby; and 200 to the Society at Belpar.

Read a paper called a Proclamation, dated the 21st instant, for suppressing seditious publications.

The society came to several resolutions on this proclamation; the last of which is,

That the monstrous enormity and grievance of the present national debt;

The grievous oppression of seventeen millions annually of taxes;

The scandalous duration of parliaments for seven years;

Private proprietors of boroughs, falsely pretending to be, and really acting as, Representatives of the People;

Judges claiming in all cases, and under all circumstances, the determination of the criminality or innocence of any act, exclusively of the jury; expensive armaments, and menacing proclamations and encampments in time of a profound peace:

These things we cannot believe either wise or wholesome; and we declare it to be a fatal omission, at the time of the revolution, that these things were not sufficiently guarded against; and we feel it our duty, to the utmost of our power, to obtain a full and fair representation of the people, which we hold to be the only effectual security for their rights, liberties, and property, and to be the only measure that can produce, "that due submission to the laws, and that just confidence in the integrity and wisdom of parliament," which are declared in the said paper, called a proclamation, to be "the chief causes (under Providence) of the wealth, the happiness, and the prosperity of the kingdom."

Read a communication from the London Corresponding Society, as follows:

Sir,

By direction of the delegates of the London Corresponding Society, I have the honour of enclosing to you a copy of their address

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dress and regulations, which I request you will communicate to the Constitutional Society.

I am truly, Sir,

Your most obedient and

very humble servant,

— — Secretary.

Bell, Exeter Street,

May 24th, 1792.

To the Chairman of the
Constitutional Society.

Resolved, That the thanks of this society be returned to the London Corresponding Society, for the communication which it has made to this society; and that the further consideration of the said communication be postponed to the next meeting of this society.

At a Meeting, 1st June 1792.

The secretary reported that he had sent 1,200 of the printed bills ordered at the last meeting to the Sheffield Constitutional Society;—1,200 to Norwich Constitutional Society;—to the Southwark Constitutional Society 200;—to the London Corresponding Society 200;—to a person to be forwarded to Derby 200;—to the Constitutional Whigs 200;—to the Society at Belpar 200.

Resolved, That the secretary do send to Birmingham 600;—to the Society at Aldgate 200;—to Manchester 1,200;—to Liverpool 200;—to Cambridge 500;—and 400 to [a person] to be distributed among the Societies in the neighbourhood of Glasgow.

Read a Letter from the Corresponding Society as follows:

Sir,

31st May, 1792:

The London Corresponding Society return thanks to the Society for Constitutional Information for the communication of Mr. Thomas Paine's Letter to them, and of their resolutions subsequent thereto.

It gives us infinite satisfaction to think that mankind will soon reap the advantage of Mr. Paine's labours, in a new and cheaper edition of the Rights of Man.

We are, however, no ways surpris'd at the report of a prosecution being commenced against his works, for, by the doctrine substituted for law in England, that truth constitutes the libel, the very many truths in both volumes of the Rights of Man, render them completely libellous, and force administration, perhaps against their inclination, to submit them to the impartial investigation of competent judges.

His majesty's proclamation next engages our notice;—after reading it with great attention, we discard an idea thrown out by some, that it had been drawn up and sent forth at this juncture with a view of raising unfavourable prejudices in the minds of the people against Mr. Paine, or his works, now under a prosecution; inasmuch as such an attempt, if it could be proved, would not only bear malice on the face of it, but would likewise be a most daring violation of the laws.

We are more willing to discover therein his majesty's great goodness of heart and paternal care, anticipating our warmest wishes,

wishes, giving the greatest encouragement to our different societies, and holding forth the same strong desire with us of *abiding by the constitution in its pure and uncorrupt state, of securing the public peace and prosperity, of preserving to ALL the full enjoyment of their rights and liberties, both religious and civil; and seeming in fact to encourage them under the most serious consideration of their own welfare and that of their posterity, to join us, and unite their endeavours with ours in guarding against all attempts, aiming at the subversion of wholesome and regular government, and to discourage and repress, to the utmost of their power, all proceedings tending to produce riots and tumults.*

Our ends being thus uncontrovertibly the same, and thereby enjoying the royal sanction, we imagine that in exercising our right of meeting, when and where we please, of canvassing such subjects as we think proper, of instructing our fellow citizens, and of uniting our endeavours to obtain a perfect representation in parliament, we are taking the truest method of securing to ourselves and our posterity all the blessings of liberty and peace.

Yielding to the Society for Constitutional Information, both in priority of institution, and in greatness of abilities, we yet put in our claim for equality of zeal towards the public good, and firm determination to obtain it.

We are, &c.

— — — Chairman.

— — — Secretary.

To the Chairman of the Society for
Constitutional Information

Ordered, That the said letter be published in such newspapers as will receive the advertisements of this society.

Resolved, That an open committee do take into consideration Paine's Letter, and have power to transmit copies to the different Corresponding Societies.

6,000 copies of the resolutions relative to the proclamation to be printed, and sent to the different Corresponding Societies.

At a Meeting, 15th June 1792.

Read a letter from the London Corresponding Society, stating, that they had opened a subscription for the defence of Mr. Paine, and that they wished six of their members might be associated with this society.

Ordered, That the secretary be desired to inform the secretary of the London Corresponding Society, that this society received their proposal with pleasure; and are willing to admit such six of the members whom they shall nominate, to be associated members of this society.

Resolved, That a subscription be opened in this society for the benefit of Mr. Thomas Paine, Author of *The Rights of Man*.

Ordered, That the letter of the London Corresponding Society, and the two last resolutions, be published in the newspapers.

Resolved, That 12,000 copies of Mr. Paine's Letter to Mr. Secretary Dundas, be printed by this society, for the purpose of being transmitted to our correspondents throughout Great Britain; and that a committee be appointed to direct the same.

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At a Meeting, 22d June 1792.

A member reported that an information was filed against Mr. Paine, for his publication of *The Rights of Man*.

Ordered, That the subscription entered into for the benefit of Mr. Thomas Paine be entered in a separate part of the book, and kept open for the members of this society.

At a Meeting, 29th June 1792.

The committee report a plan of distribution of the 12,000 copies of Mr. Paine's Letter to Mr. Dundas; which is adopted.

At a Meeting, 6th July 1792.

Read Letter from the Secretary to the London Corresponding Society.

Sir,

In the name of the London Corresponding Society, I have to return thanks to the Society for Constitutional Information for their present of 200 copies of their resolutions respecting the king's proclamation, as also for the 200 copies of Mr. Paine's Letter, &c.—Likewise Mr. Paine's Letter to Mr. Secretary Dundas;—by care in the distribution of them, those 600 papers shall be seen by as many thousand persons.

We find ourselves highly favoured by your readiness to admit six of our members among you; I am directed to forward to you the following six names as the persons chosen by our society for that honourable purpose; our sense of the favour so conferred will be best expressed by their close attendance at your instructive meetings, and constant endeavours to forward the so beneficial, and so much wanted reform of parliamentary representation.

I am, Sir,

with great respect,

July 6, 1792.

Your very humble servant,

Secretary.

A deputation from the Friends of the People in Southwark, on the subject of the dinner of 14th July, attended.

On a motion to dine with them, the previous question put, and carried.

At a Meeting, 13th July 1792.

The six gentlemen recommended by the London Corresponding Society, unanimously elected.

The society to dine at the Shakespeare the 14th of July.

At a Meeting 28th September 1792.

Read a Letter from the London Corresponding Society, to the Secretary.

Sir,

The London Corresponding Society having taken the resolution of transmitting to the French National Convention an Address (signed by all the members, or by the different delegates, each stating for how many members he signs) to assure that suffering nation that we sympathise with them in their misfortunes—that we view their exertions with admiration—that we wish to give them all such countenance and support as individuals unsupported and oppressed themselves can afford—and that should those in

power

power here dare (in violation of the nation's pledged faith of neutrality, and in opposition to the well-known sentiments of the people at large) to join the German band of despots united against liberty, we disclaim all concurrence therein, and will, to a man, exert every justifiable means for counteracting their machinations against the freedom and the happiness of mankind.

I am ordered by the committee to acquaint the Society for Constitutional Information therewith, in order to be favoured with their opinion thereon, and in hopes that if they approve the idea, and recommend its adoption to the different societies, the publication of such a respectable number of *real* names will greatly check the hostile measures which might otherwise be put in execution.

I am, with great respect,

Dear Sir,

London, 21st Sept. 1792.

Your very humble servant,

———— Secretary.

Resolved, That the secretary express the thanks of this society to the London Corresponding Society, for their communication; and acquaint them that this society do highly approve of their intention.

Resolved, That the said letter be read at the next meeting, for the purpose of considering of publishing the same.

At a Meeting, 5th October 1792.

Resolved, That the letter from the Corresponding Society entered on the minutes of the last meeting, together with the resolution of the society thereon, be published in the newspapers.

Read a letter from the Constitutional Whigs independent, and Friends of the People, accompanied with fifty copies of a letter transmitted to them from the Friends of Freedom at Cherbourg.

Ordered, That the secretary return the thanks of this society to the Constitutional Whigs, for their communication.

At a Meeting, 12th October 1792.

Read Mr. Barlow's Letter to the National Convention of France, on the defects of the Constitution of 1791, and the extent of the amendments which ought to be applied.

Resolved, That ——— be requested to draw up an answer to the letter of Mr. Barlow, read at the last meeting, expressing how much pride this society feel at having elected him an honorary member.

Ordered, That the secretary be directed to transmit a copy of the Argus of to-morrow to each of the members of this society.

Read a letter from the London Corresponding Society, with an inclosed Address to the National Convention of France.

Sir,

Your favour of the 3d instant, informing us that our proposal for addressing the French National Convention had met with the approbation of the Society for Constitutional Information; we have enclosed you a copy of the address we have drawn up and mean to send, the society at large having approved of it.

Not in the least presuming to propose it for the adoption of your society, ourselves will joyfully throw it aside, and as readily subscribe to any production of yours better calculated to answer the purpose,

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purpose, and less unworthy being presented to so august an assembly.

Should no other be produced, we imagine this plain but honest address will be adopted by some other societies, in concurrence with our own, and, respecting the manner of signing, of conveying, and of presenting it, your better experienced advice will greatly oblige, gentlemen,

Your very humble servant, for the Committee of the London Corresponding Society,

MAURICE MARGAROT, Chairman.

Thursday, 11th Oct. 1792.

———— Sec.

Frenchmen,

While Foreign robbers are ravaging your territories under the specious pretext of justice, cruelty and desolation leading on their van, perfidy with treachery bringing up their rear, yet mercy and friendship impudently held forth to the world as the sole motives of their incursions, the oppressed part of mankind, forgetting for a while their own sufferings, feel only for yours, and with an anxious eye watch the event, fervently supplicating the Almighty Ruler of the universe to be favourable to your cause, so intimately blended with their own. Frowned upon by an oppressive system of controul, whose gradual but continued encroachments have deprived this nation of nearly all its boasted liberty, and brought us almost to that abject state of slavery from which you have so emerged, five thousand British citizens, indignant, manfully step forth to rescue their country from the opprobrium brought upon it by the supine conduct of those in power; they conceive it to be the duty of Britons to countenance and assist, to the utmost of their power, the champions of human happiness, and to swear to a nation proceeding on the plan you have adopted, an inviolable friendship; sacred from this day be that friendship between us, and may vengeance to the uttermost overtake the man who, hereafter, shall attempt to cause a rupture.

Though we appear so few at present, be assured, Frenchmen, that our number increases daily. It is true, that the stern uplifted arm of authority at present keeps back the timid; that busily circulated impostures hourly mislead the credulous; and that court intimacy with avowed French traitors has some effect on the unwary and on the ambitious; but with certainty we can inform you, friends and freemen, that information makes a rapid progress among us; curiosity has taken possession of the public mind; the conjoint reign of ignorance and despotism passes away; men now ask each other what is freedom, what are our rights? Frenchmen, you are already free, and Britons are preparing to become so. Casting far from us the criminal prejudices artfully inculcated by evil minded men and wily courtiers, we, instead of natural enemies, at length discover in Frenchmen our fellow citizens of the world, and our brethren by the same Heavenly Father, who created us for the purpose of loving and mutually assisting each other, but not to hate, and to be ever ready to cut each others throats at

the command of weak and ambitious kings and corrupt ministers;—Seeking our real enemies, we find them in our bosoms, we feel ourselves inwardly torn by, and ever the victims of a restless and all consuming aristocracy, hitherto the bane of every nation under the sun. Wisely have you acted in expelling it from France.

Warm as our wishes are for your success, eager as we are to behold freedom triumphant, and man every where restored to the enjoyment of his just rights, a sense of our duty as orderly citizens forbids our flying in arms to your assistance; our government has pledged the National Faith to remain neutral—in a struggle of liberty against despotism Britons remain neutral! O shame! But we have entrusted our King with discretionary powers, we therefore must obey,—our hands are bound, but our hearts are free, and they are with you.

Let German despots act as they please, we shall rejoice at their fall, compassionating however their enslaved subjects. We hope this tyranny of their masters will prove the means of re-instating, in the full enjoyment of their rights and liberties, millions of our fellow creatures.

With unconcern, therefore, we view the elector of Hanover join his troops to traitors and robbers—but the King of Great-Britain will do well to remember that this country is not Hanover—should he forget this distinction we will not.

While you enjoy the envied glory of being the unaided defenders of freedom, we fondly anticipate in idea, the numerous blessings mankind will enjoy. If you succeed, as we ardently wish, the triple alliance (not of crowns, but) of the people of America, France, and Britain, will give freedom to Europe, and peace to the whole world. Dear friends, you combat for the advantage of the human race—How well purchased will be, though at the expence of much blood, the glorious unprecedented privilege of saying mankind is free—Tyrants and tyranny are no more—Peace reigns on the earth, and this is the work of Frenchmen.

Resolved, That the thanks of this society be given to the London Corresponding Society for the above address, transmitted by them; and that the secretary acquaint them this society do highly approve of the spirit of the same.

At a meeting 19th October, 1792, an answer to Joel Barlow, prepared by ——— was produced, read, approved, and, with his letter ordered to be published.

A committee appointed to confer with the delegates of the London Corresponding Society, on an address to the National Convention of France.

At a meeting 26th October, 1792, the secretary read the report of the committee appointed at the last meeting.

Resolved, 1st, That it is the opinion of this committee, the purpose of the address drawn up by the London Corresponding Society will be much better answered by separate addresses from the different societies, than by one joint address.

2d, That the committee, for that reason, do not recommend a concurrence with the London Corresponding Society in the presentation of a joint address.

3d, That the committee, warmly approving the principles and spirit of the address from the London Corresponding Society, recommend the society to follow so laudable an example.

4th, That it is the opinion of this committee, that the thanks of the society are due to the gentlemen delegates from the London Corresponding Society for their punctual attendance, and for the able and candid manner in which they assisted in discussing the subject of the conference.

Read a letter, with its enclosure, from the editor of the patriot, at Sheffield.

The letter itself complains of the Constitutional Society for not answering a former letter, and encloses a letter from the editor to a society at Stockport, which society the writer recommends to the attention and protection of the Constitutional Society.—The following are extracts from the inclosure.

It only remains then for us, seeing the great and innumerable difficulties, we have to encounter, to cast about for the most likely and proper means and weapons by which to defend ourselves, and to forward and support such measures as it may be necessary to pursue; and on this head, my good Sir, permit me to impress it on the minds of your society, that reason, imperial reason, must ever be our generalissimo or commander in chief; when I say this, I beg leave to add, that art must be second in command. By the word "art" I do not mean low craft or cunning, but that mode of application of our reason and arguments on different men and on different occasions, which only a considerable degree of study, and practical knowledge also of men and manners, can ever furnish us with, so as to make us proficient.

Allow me then to observe to you, Sir, that I perfectly coincide with you in opinion with regard to the different societies appointing delegates to go into the different villages and country places for the purpose of informing their minds, and rousing them from the lethargy in which they seem plunged—I have already communicated the same idea to the London Constitutional and Corresponding Societies, and to those of Norwich and Manchester, and I hope it will soon be universally adopted by every one. But the grand object to be attended to on this head is the choice of men to be appointed; a neglect of this kind had like to have had very awkward consequences in this neighbourhood, and if not immediately checked would have injured the cause of freedom very greatly; infinite care and circumspection will thereof be necessary on this head.

As I am on the subject, permit me to suggest to those members of your society who may undertake this arduous but honourable and praise-worthy task, that they cannot be too cautious in their mode of proceeding.—The minds of men, for the wisest and best purposes, are formed by the Great Creator as various and unlike each other as their faces, and their passions reign over each with the same uncertain and variegated sway; and in the same manner that Sir Robert Walpole (one of the elders and fathers of corruption) very justly observed that every man has his price in the way of being bought, so we may fairly apply the same maxim to mankind

mankind in general in the article of persuasion, and the dexterous method of bringing them from wrong opinions they may have formed, or prejudices they may have imbibed, by an attentive observation of their intellectual faculties, and that leading passion of the soul which governs the main spring of their most material actions.

For example, the generality of farmers in this county and Lancashire are as ignorant as the brutes they ride to market, and so absorbed in the sordid idea of *getting*, that provided they can keep up the prices of grain, cattle, &c. so as to answer their landlords, and pay *their taxes*, however enormous, they are too sluggish and indolent to think about reforms, or any thing of the kind; yet there is one string about their hearts, which, being skilfully touched, will make them dance to any tune, and move to any measure. This is the subject of *tythes*; and why does it touch them? why, Sir, because it is within the scope of their limited capacity—ignorant as they are in other matters, they see and pungently feel the weight of this baneful and unjust devourer of all their improvements in agriculture and husbandry; and, I believe, did every tax operate in the same visible degree which this imposition does, I fear there would be an end to the idea of taxation being submitted to at all. Indeed, as taxes are laid on at present by those who do not represent us, the taxation is neither more nor less than robbery, a submission to it, slavery.

But to return to my subject: *In the same manner that a farmer may be roused by the mention of tythes, the shoemakers may by the excessive dearth of leather, the inn-keeper by the numerous and unnecessary standing army, and ALL by a temperate and dispassionate relation of the immense number of sinecure places and useless offices, in which the corrupt and prostitute favourites, agents, and dependants of the rich and great riot in the spoils and plunder wrested from the sweat of the brow, and continual labour of body, of the husbandman, the mechanic, the labourer, and the artificer. It is by no means a difficult matter to raise general indignation at the idea of so small a comparative number of useless, idle, and profligate Drones sucking and squandering away the honey produced by such immense numbers of hard toiling and industrious Bees. If you (for I am certain you will be one of the most active of these delegates) meet with men who have violent prejudices in favour of any abuse, or party, never attack those prejudices directly, for that will only enflame and confirm them the more; pass them over for the present, and engage their attention towards something else, in which they will listen with a less degree of apprehension of being attacked in a favourite point; once gain their good opinion, and open their eyes to one evil, they will be more ready to hear you on others, till at last the favoured object by which their eyes were jaundiced will appear in its true colours, and fall before your arguments like all the rest.*

There is one thing above all others which requires to be particularly attended to, and that is, to endeavour to undeceive the mass of people with respect to those falsehoods which have been industriously propagated by the enemies to a reform, in order to
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blind, delude, and terrify all ranks of people who are any way independent, or possessed of property. One of these falsehoods is "that the advocates of reform wish to introduce a levelling scheme, or an equal partition of property." This alarms the farmers, and indeed all classes of men, who by their industry, or other adventitious circumstances, are possessed of the goods of this world. So many vile ministerial prints as have propagated this doctrine, aided and assisted by the private representations, or rather misrepresentations, of the clergy, and other tools of government, and of privileged orders, have had a very wonderful and baneful effect on the multitude, and have stamped a dread of reform on the minds of many that I know, whose situations in life would induce one reasonably to suppose it impossible so completely to impose upon them; however, it always has been the case, that falsehoods boldly uttered may prevail for a time, but must be overwhelmed in the end by the bright and sacred energies of truth.

To explain this matter, and many others, properly, will require great coolness, moderation, and patience. I have found the following method answer best: "Do you know such a gentleman?" naming some one of large property and good character in the neighbourhood, who is known to be a friend to a reform. "Yes."—"Well, and do you suppose that he would promote a scheme that would occasion and oblige him to part with that property he possesses, in order for it to be divided amongst strangers whom he never saw or heard of?" "No."—"Why then should you suffer yourself to be imposed on by such an idle tale, fabricated and circulated for the purpose of raising a dread in you against those more enlightened of your fellow citizens who wish for a reform, as you would did you see its necessity; a dread which may cause you to shut your eyes upon oppressive excise and game laws, exorbitant tythes, an unnecessary *standing army*, kept on foot at the expence of two millions and an half, for the purposes of influence and corruption; a pension list, which is a disgrace to the government, and a stigma and reproach on the spirit and prudence of the nation; sinecure places, for the mere possessing of which hundreds of individuals receive thousands a year each for doing *nothing at all*, either for the *public service* or *their own*; in short, such an enormous accumulation of taxes, and to prodigal an expenditure of their produce, as no nation on the earth ever heard of or submitted to before. To make you shut your eyes, and continue blind to these enormities, those idle and futile tales are villainously dispersed abroad; but believe them not, consult your own reason, and it will shew you, that there is a palpable lie on the face of every one of them?" Then explain the nature, aim, and end of your society, invite them to attend it, and to judge for themselves. If they do so, they will soon aid and assist you, by adopting similar ones in their several neighbourhoods, till in time they will overspread the whole surface of this Seagirt Isle.

At present, Sir, I will not trouble you further on the subject, which I now quit to return to the conduct und regulation of your own society, and all others which may arise hereafter; and as to them, I think the Innkeepers in Stockport, Manchester, &c. have
given

given you a hint and lesson for which you ought to esteem yourselves for ever obliged to them. I own their insolence and audacity in proceeding as they have done is beyond example, but only deserving of contempt—as such, leave them to themselves. Public houses were never worthy of receiving such guests, whose sacred and important duty require and demand to be performed in mansions more dignified and respectable. Your meetings should be at the houses of one another, in honourable rotation; and, to prevent inconvenience from too great a number, not more than ten or twelve at the most should compose a *primary* or district meeting. More members *may* be admitted in each district, till they reach twenty or twenty-four, according to the number fixed on—but then immediately should divide into two district meetings.—The several districts should send each one member, by election, to a meeting of delegates, and this meeting of delegates should elect out of their own body a *certain* number, which is to compose a select committee. This select committee to manage the correspondence, and every other important concern, for the whole of the districts in any town or parish, subject always to the revision and approbation of the districts. The delegates and select committee to be chosen only for a limited time; before the expiration of which others to be elected as before, from the districts, to supply their places, by which rotations every member would in *time* become qualified to be a delegate and a select committee man, though he might not be so on his first entrance as a district member. These are only hints, on which you may improve or enlarge as much as you please.

Ordered, That the said letter be taken into consideration the first business at the next meeting.

Resolved, That at the next meeting of this society they do consider of an answer to the Corresponding Society, on the subject of their letter, accompanying their address to the National Convention.

Resolved, That at the said meeting the society do attend to the example of the London Corresponding Society, and consider of an address to the National Convention of France.

At a Meeting, 9th November 1792.

The committee appointed at the last meeting to prepare an address from this society to the National Convention of France made their report, and produced the following address; which was read and approved.

The Society for Constitutional Information in London to the National Convention in France.

Servants of a Sovereign people, and Benefactors of mankind,

We rejoice that your revolution has arrived at that point of perfection which will permit us to address you by this title; it is the only one that can accord with the character of true legislators. Every successive epoch in your affairs has added something to the triumphs of liberty; and the glorious victory of the 10th of August has finally prepared the way for a constitution, which we trust you will establish on the basis of reason and nature.

Considering the mass of delusion accumulated on mankind to
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obscure their understandings, you cannot be astonished at the opposition you have met both from tyrants and from slaves. The instrument used against you by each of these classes is the same; for in the genealogy of human miseries *ignorance* is at once the parent of oppression and the child of submission.

The events of every day are proving that your cause is cherished by the people in all your continental vicinity; that a majority of each of those nations are your real friends, whose governments have tutored them into apparent foes, and that the only wait to be delivered by your arms from the dreaded necessity of fighting against them.

The condition of Englishmen is less to be deplored—here the hand of oppression has not yet ventured completely to ravish the pen from *us*; nor openly to point the sword at *you*. From bosoms burning with ardor in your cause we tender you our warmest wishes for the full extent of its progress and success. It is indeed a sacred cause; we cherish it as the pledge of your happiness, *our natural and nearest friends*, and we rely upon it as the bond of paternal union to the human race, in which union our own nation will surely be one of the first to concur.

Our Government has still the power, and perhaps the inclination, to employ hirelings to contradict us; but it is our real opinion that we now speak the sentiments of a great majority of the English nation. The people here are wearied with imposture, and worn out with war. They have learned to reflect, that both the one and the other are the offspring of unnatural Combinations in Society, as relative to systems of government, not the result of the natural temper of nations as relative to each other's happiness.

Go on, Legislators, in the work of human happiness. The benefits will in part be our's, but the glory shall be all your own—it is the reward of your perseverance; it is the prize of virtue. The sparks of liberty preserved in England for ages, like the coruscations of the northern Aurora, served but to shew the darkness visible in the rest of Europe. The lustre of the American Republic, like an effulgent morning, arose with increasing vigour, but still too distant to enlighten our hemisphere, till the splendor of the French Revolution burst forth upon the nations in the full fervour of a meridian sun, and displayed in the midst of the European the piratical result of principles, which philosophy had sought in the shade of speculation, and which experience must every where confirm. It dispels the clouds of prejudice from all people, reveals the secrets of all despotism, and creates a new character in man.

In this career of improvement your example will be soon followed; for nations rising from their lethargy, will re-claim the Rights of Man with a voice which man cannot resist.

Signed, by Order of the Society,

_____ Chairman.

_____ Secretary.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Society be given to the Committee who prepared the above address.

Resolved,

Resolved, That Mr. Barlow and Mr. Frost be deputed by this Society to present the address of this Society at the bar of the National Convention of France.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Society be given to Mr. Barlow and Mr. Frost for accepting the above deputation.

At a Meeting, 30th November 1792.

Read a letter from Mr. _____ of Leicester.

Ordered, That the Secretary do write to Mr. _____ and acquaint him, that if he will transmit to him the declaration proposed to be drawn up by the Leicester Society, the Secretary will lay the same before a Committee of this Society, who will revise the same.

Ordered, That the declaration which shall be sent from the Leicester Society be referred to the Committee of Correspondence.

At a Meeting the 14th of December.

Read a printed Address from Manchester.

Resolved, That the said address be approved for publishing in the news-papers.

A motion was made and seconded, That the 20th law of this Society be suspended on *this* occasion; which motion was carried in the affirmative.

Resolved, That the said address be printed in the news papers.

Resolved, That one hundred thousand copies of the same be printed by this society, and distributed to their correspondents in Great Britain and Ireland.

The following Resolutions were proposed by a Member of the Society:

Resolved, 1st. That the object of this society, from its first institution to the present moment of alarm, has uniformly been to promote the welfare of the people by all constitutional means, and to expose, in their true light, the abuses which have imperceptibly crept in, and at last grown to such a height as to raise the most serious apprehensions in every true friend of the constitution.

Resolved, 2d. That this Society disclaims the idea of wishing to effect a change in the present system of things by violence and public commotion; but that it trusts to the good sense of the people, when they shall be fully enlightened on the subject, to procure, without disturbing the public tranquility an effectual and permanent reform.

Resolved, 3d. That the intentions of this and of similar societies have of late been grossly calumniated, by those who are interested to perpetuate abuses, and their agents, who have been industrious to represent the members of such societies as men of dangerous principles, wishing to destroy all social order disturb the state of property, and introduce anarchy and confusion instead of regular government.

Resolved, 4th, That in order to counteract the operation of such gross aspersions, and to prevent them from checking the progress of liberal enquiry, it is, at this time, peculiarly expedient that

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that this and similar societies should publicly assert the rectitude of their principles.

Resolved, That the said resolutions be adopted, in order for printing in the news-papers.

Read a Letter from the Society of Friends of Liberty and Equality, sitting at Laon, capital of the department De L'Aisne, to the Patriotic Society of London, named the Society for Constitutional Information.

Resolved, That the said Letter be referred to the Committee of Correspondence.

At a Meeting, 21st December 1792.

The Secretary reported that he had offered the Address which was sent to the last Meeting from Manchester, and ordered to be published, to the Offices of the Morning Chronicle and Morning Post, and that they had refused to print them; that the Morning Post had given a written answer to his application, which being read;

Ordered, That the same be entered in the books of this society.

"This excellent paper, drawn by a masterly hand, we wish to see in the possession of every Englishman; but after the verdict against Mr. Paine, which was not warranted by the Law or Constitution, the proprietors of news-papers tremble at inserting any thing except fulsome panegyrics, on a depraved Legislature and hungry Court Minions—the vile associations have worked the public mind into such a fervour, that a Jury would, by the intimation of a Judge, find any thing a Libel—we therefore can only express our sorrow that self-preservation will not permit us to make the Morning Post the vehicle to convey this paper to the public."

Read a letter from Mr. —, of Manchester.

Resolved, That the address from Manchester, together with the resolution, be published in news-papers, in Scotland.

Read a letter from the society of the Friends to Liberty and Equality, at Macon, in the department of Saone and Loire.

Ordered, That the same be entered on the minutes of the society.

[A blank is left in the book where it should be entered.]

Resolved, That ————— be a committee for foreign correspondence.

Resolved, That the letter from the said society be referred to the committee for foreign correspondence.

Ordered, That the proceedings of the committee for foreign correspondence be entered in a separate book.

At a meeting, 18th January 1793.

Resolved, That citizen St. André, a member of the National Convention of France, being considered by us as one of the most judicious and enlightened friends of human liberty, be admitted an associated honorary member of this society.

Resolved, That the said resolution be published in the newspapers.

At a meeting, 25th January 1793.

Resolved, That citizen Barrère, a member of the National Convention of France, being considered by us as one of the most judicious and enlightened friends of human liberty, be admitted an associated honorary member of this society.

Resolved, That citizen Roland, being also considered by us as one of the most judicious and enlightened friends of human liberty, be admitted an associated honorary member of this society.

Resolved, That the said resolutions be published in the newspapers.

Resolved, That it appears to this society, from the best information we can obtain, that the people of Great Britain are, at this present time, utterly averse to a war with France, and consider such an event as a calamity of the human race, however it may gratify a confederacy of foreign Kings.

Resolved, That the said resolution be published in the newspapers.

At a meeting, 1st February 1793.

Read a circular letter from the Sheffield Society for Constitutional Information.

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to report an answer.

Resolved, That the speeches of citizen André and citizen Barrère (associated honorary members of this society) as given in the Gazette National ou Moniteur Universelle of Paris, on the 4th, 6th, and 7th of January 1793, be inserted in the books of this society.

Resolved, That the said resolutions be published in the newspapers.

At a meeting, 15th February 1793.

Read a letter from the Society for Constitutional Information at Birmingham, of which the following is an extract:

Our society requests the favour of your admitting the following twelve persons, whose names are subscribed, to be enrolled members of your society, for the purpose of corresponding with yours and every other similar institution in the nation, for the better regulating our measures, and receiving instruction.

Wishing you all the success your laudable undertaking deserves, we are, with sincerity,

Your Fellow Citizens and Friends.

Resolved, That the twelve members of the Birmingham society for Constitutional Information, recommended in the said letter, be admitted associated members of this society.

Resolved, That the said letter, and the election of the said twelve members, be published in the newspapers (exclusive of their names).

At a meeting 15th March 1793.

Read a letter from the Constitutional Society at Sheffield, inclosing the resolutions of the 13th of February last.

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Resolved, That the secretary be instructed to return the thanks of this society to the society for Constitutional Information at Sheffield for their communication; and to acquaint them that this society perfectly agree with them in their sentiments, with respect to the calamities of war in general, and that they concur with them in thinking that the thanks of the community at large are due to all those who have exerted themselves to prevent the present war.

Resolved, That the thanks of this society be given to Joel Barlow and John Frost, for their conduct in the presentation of the address of this society to the National Convention of France; and that Mr. Frost be assured that our regard for him is not lessened, but increased, by the prosecutions and persecutions which his faithful and due discharge of that commission may bring upon him.

At a meeting, 5th April 1793.

Resolved, That a letter be written to Simon Butler and Oliver Bond, Esquires, expressive of the high sense we entertain of their exertions in the cause of freedom; and to assure them that we consider the imprisonment they at present suffer on that account as illegal and unconstitutional.

The following letter was produced, and read:

Gentlemen,

It is not easy for men, who feel strongly and sincerely, to convey those feelings by letters we therefore rely on your conceiving for us much of that which we are unable to express of you. We think, however, that we shall be guilty of a great omission, did we neglect the opportunity of sending you, by Mr. Hamilton Rowan, the honest tribute of our esteem and admiration for your brave and manly resistance to the usurped jurisdiction of the Irish aristocracy.

Permit us to offer you our thanks, and our grateful acknowledgment of your efforts in what we consider as a common cause, while we lament our inability of proving ourselves useful in your defence.

Although we are of different kingdoms, still we are but one people; and as the freedom of one continent has already spread its influence to Europe, so on the other hand we are persuaded that the establishment of Despotism in Ireland must end in the Slavery of Great Britain. But the light of liberty is not confined to one shore or one latitude.

We know that it is easier to admire than to practice those virtues that tend to the public benefit. Yet so long as the exertions of a few courageous men must influence the minds of at least the independent and thinking part of the community, we are assured that their labour is not fruitless. We trust therefore the time will soon arrive, when the abuse of power in either nation will have no other consequence than the ruin of those who have committed that injustice. We hope, and we doubt not, of soon seeing the day, when the post of honour shall be no longer that of

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obloquy and punishment, but when those who have risked their liberty and fortune in the cause of their countrymen, may find protection in the undisputed, uninterrupted exercise of trial by jury, with a full and adequate representation of the people in parliament.

At a meeting, 12th April 1793.

Read an answer directed to be prepared to the letter received from the United Political Societies in Norwich.

Resolved, That the said answer be sent by the secretary to the secretary of the said societies.

Mr. — read an answer (directly to be prepared by him) to the letter received from Mr. — of Birmingham.

Read a letter from Mr. Hamilton Rowan to the secretary of this society.

Ordered, That the said letter be entered in the books of this society.

Mr. Hamilton Rowan presents his compliments to Mr. Adams; he did intend to have done himself the pleasure of waiting on him, but has been so intolerably hurried by private business as to have been prevented from his purpose, and fears he shall not have it in his power before he leaves this town for Ireland, which will be either on Monday evening or early on Tuesday morning. He knows that no more pleasurable sensation can be received by Messrs. Butler and Bond, as well as by all those gentlemen who are acting with them, and who, though not under present, are liable to future prosecution, than the countenance and support of those who are really engaged in the cause of man in general, and such we believe the members of the society for Constitutional Information to be, and as such H. R. in particular will remember the kind fraternity with which he had the honour of being received by them; and, as a member of the united Irishmen of Dublin, would be happy to have it in his power to return the compliment in his own country.

Osborne's Hotel, Adelphi,

7th April, 1793.

At a meeting, 21st June 1793.

Read the Sheffield and Nottingham petitions to the House of Commons.

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to prepare an address to the British Nation; and that the said committee be an open committee.

At a meeting, 28th June 1793.

Copies of Two Petitions from the town of Nottingham presented.

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to prepare an address to the British Nation.

Resolved, That [two members, who are named] be requested to prepare the said address.

At

At a meeting, 25th October, 1793.

Read a letter from the secretary to the society for Constitutional Information at Coventry, to —— accompanied with some addresses from the said society.

Resolved, That the thanks of this society be returned to the Coventry Society, for their communication.

Mr. Sinclair read a letter, with an address from Mr. Skirving, secretary to the Convention of the Friends of the People in Scotland, to the secretary to the London Corresponding Society.

Resolved, That an extraordinary general meeting of this society be called for Monday next, at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, at six o'clock in the evening, to consider of the utility and propriety of sending delegates to a convention of delegates of the different societies in Great Britain, to be held at Edinburgh, for the purpose of obtaining a Parliamentary Reform.

Resolved, That the substance of the motion be inserted in the letter.

At a meeting, 28th October, 1793.

Read addresses to the friends of the people of parliamentary reform, signed by Wm. Skirving, secretary to the General Convention at Edinburgh.

Resolved, That this society do send delegates to the ensuing Convention to be held in Edinburgh for promoting a reform in parliament.

Resolved, That two members of this society be elected as delegates to the said convention.

Resolved, That the secretary do deliver to the delegates appointed by this society to represent them in the Convention at Edinburgh, copies of the proceedings of the 25th and 28th instant, by which they are appointed to that office.

Instructions to the Delegates.

The delegates are instructed on the part of this society, to assist in bringing forward and supporting any constitutional measure for procuring a real representation of the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament. That in specifying the redress to be demanded of existing abuses, the delegates ought never to lose sight of the two essential principles, General Suffrage and Annual Representation, together with the unalienable right in the people to Reform; and that a reasonable and known compensation ought to be made to the Representatives of the Nation, by a National Contribution.

That the delegates do punctually correspond with the society, for the purpose of communicating information, and of receiving such farther instruction as the exigency may require.

Resolved, That the above be the directions to the delegates.

Resolved, That seven guineas be allowed to each of the delegates for travelling; and a sum not exceeding three guineas per week each be allowed them during the sitting of the convention

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of delegates; and that a subscription be now opened for that purpose, and that the secretary be requested to receive the same.

Resolved, That the proceedings of Friday the 24th and Monday the 28th October, 1793, be signed by the chairman and secretary.

Resolved, That the secretary be requested to write to the different societies with which this society is in correspondence, informing them that the London Corresponding Society, together with this society have elected delegates to the Convention of Delegates, to meet at Edinburgh on the 29th instant; and to request their concurrence in this important measure.

At a Meeting, 8th November, 1793.

Read letters from the Constitutional Societies at Sheffield, Leeds, and Birmingham, in answer to the secretary's letters of the 28th ultimo.

At a meeting 6th December, 1793.

Read a letter from Mr. ———, delegate from this society at Edinburgh, dated 7th November, with the secretary's answer to that letter; and also another letter from Mr. ———, dated 12th November.

Resolved, That a general meeting of this society be called for the second Friday in January next, for the purpose of considering the important letters received from the delegate, Mr. ———.

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to correspond with our delegate, Mr. ———.

At a meeting, 10th January, 1794.

Resolved that the important letter received from Mr. ———, the delegate from this society to the Convention at Edinburgh, and the subsequent proceedings of that convention, be taken into consideration on Friday next, and that a general meeting of the society be called for that purpose.

At a meeting, 17th January, 1794.

Resolved, That law ceases to be an object of obedience, whenever it becomes an instrument of oppression.

Resolved, That we recall to mind, with the deepest satisfaction, the merited fate of the infamous Jefferies, once Lord Chief Justice of England, who at the era of the glorious revolution, for the many iniquitous sentences which he had passed, was torn to pieces by a brave and injured people.

Resolved, That those who imitate his example deserve his fate.

Resolved, That the Tweed, though it may divide countries, ought not, and does not, make a separation between those principles of common severity, in which Englishmen and Scotsmen are equally interested; that injustice in Scotland, is injustice in England; and that the safety of Englishmen is endangered whenever their brethren of Scotland, for a conduct which entitles them to the approbation of all wise, and the support of all brave men, are sentenced to Botany Bay, a punishment hitherto inflicted only on felons.

Resolved, That we see with regret, but we see without fear, that the period is fast approaching when the liberties of Britons

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must depend not upon reason, to which they have long appealed, nor on their powers of expressing it, but on their firm and undaunted resolution to oppose tyranny by the same means by which it is exercised.

Resolved, That we approve of the conduct of the British Convention, who, though assailed by force, have not been answered by argument; and who, unlike the members of a certain assembly, have no interest distinct from the common body of the people.

Resolved, That a copy of the above resolutions be transmitted to citizen William Skirving, secretary to the British Convention, who is now imprisoned under colour of law, in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh.

Resolved, That the resolutions now passed be published in the news-papers.

Read a letter from Mr. Hardy, secretary to the London Corresponding Society.

At a meeting, 24th January, 1794.

A motion was made, That it be resolved, That the *most excellent* address of the London Corresponding Society be inserted in the books of this society, and that the King's speech to his parliament be inserted under it, in order that they may both be always ready for the perpetual reference of the members of this society during the continuance of the present *unfortunate* war; and that (in perpetuam rei memoriam) they may be printed together in one sheet at the *happy* conclusion of it; which happy conclusion according to the present prosperous appearances, we hope and believe not to be many months distant.

An amendment was moved, That between the words (His) and (Parliament) the word (*honourable*) should be inserted.

Honourable was withdrawn.

Another amendment was then moved, That between the word (His) and (Parliament) the word (*faithful*) should be inserted.

Faithful was withdrawn.

And it was unanimously resolved, "That His, and His only, is the proper epithet for parliament upon the present occasion."

The resolution then passed unanimously in its original form.

Resolved, That the London Corresponding Society have deserved well of their country.

Resolved, That the secretary be ordered to cause forty thousand copies of the Address, the Speech, and these Resolutions, to be printed on one sheet, and properly distributed in England, Scotland, and Ireland.

Resolved that these resolutions be published in the news-papers.

Mr. — gave notice, that he would at the next meeting of this society, move that two books should be opened, one of them (bound in black) in which shall be entered all the enormities of those who deserve the censure, and in the other the merits of those who deserve the gratitude of the society.

At

At a Meeting, 14th March, 1794.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Society be given to Archibald Hamilton Rowan, Esquire, for the manly firmness with which he has uniformly pursued the objects most dear to this society, that of a fair representation of the people in parliament.

Resolved, That Archibald Hamilton Rowan, of the city of Dublin, a gentleman of the most excellent and undoubted public principles, and of the most uniform and upright conduct in the pursuit of those principles, be chosen an honorary member of this society.

Resolved, That these Resolutions be communicated to Mr. Rowan by the Secretary of this Society.

At a Meeting, 21st March, 1794.

Resolved unanimously, That the secretary of this society be directed to write to the friends of Peace and Reform at Sheffield, and to assure them, that this Society views with pleasure their steady exertions to obtain a fair representation of the people of Great Britain in Parliament, and the proper methods which may be appointed for public fasts.

At a Meeting, 28th March, 1794.

Read a letter from the London Corresponding Society.

Resolved, that the same be entered on the books of this Society.

Citizen,

March 27th, 1794.

I am directed by the London Corresponding Society to transmit the following Resolutions to the Society for Constitutional Information, and to request the sentiments of that society respecting the important measures which the present juncture of affairs seems to require.

The London Corresponding Society conceives that the moment is arrived, when a full and explicit declaration is necessary from all the friends of Freedom.—whether the late illegal and unheard of prosecutions and sentences shall determine us to abandon our cause, or shall excite us to pursue a radical reform, with an ardour proportioned to the magnitude of the object, and with a zeal as *distinguished* on our parts as the treachery of others in the same glorious cause is notorious. The Society for Constitutional Information is therefore required to determine whether or no they will be ready, when called upon, to act in conjunction with *this and other Societies*, to obtain a fair representation of the People.—Whether they concur with us in seeing the necessity of a speedy convention, for the purpose of obtaining in a constitutional and legal method, a redress of those grievances under which we at present labour, and which can only be effectually removed by a full and fair representation of the People of Great Britain. The London Corresponding Society cannot but remind their friends that the present crisis demands all the prudence, unanimity, and vigour, that ever may or can be exerted by Men and Britons; nor do they doubt but what

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what manly firmness and consistency will finally, and they believe shortly, terminate in the full accomplishment of their wishes.

I am, Fellow-Citizen,

(In my humble measure)

A Friend to the Rights of Man,

(Signed)

Secretary.

Resolved, unanimously, 1st, That dear as JUSTICE and LIBERTY are to Britons, yet the value of them is comparatively small without a dependence on their permanency; and there can be no security for the continuance of any *right* but in EQUAL LAWS.

2d, That Equal Laws can never be expected but by a full and fair representation of the People; to obtain which, in the way pointed out by the Constitution, *has been* and *is* the sole object of this Society. For this we are ready to hazard every thing, and never, but with our lives, will we relinquish an object which involves the *happiness* or even the political existence of ourselves and posterity.

3d, That it is the decided opinion of this Society, that, to secure ourselves from the future illegal and scandalous prosecutions, to prevent a repetition of wicked and unjust sentences, and to recal those wise and wholesome laws that have been wrested from us, and of which scarcely a vestige remains, there ought to be *immediately* a CONVENTION of the PEOPLE, by delegates deputed for that purpose from the different Societies of the *friends of freedom*, assembled in the various parts of this nation. And we pledge ourselves to the public, to pursue every legal method speedily to accomplish so desirable a purpose.

P.S. I have to inform you, that a general meeting of the Society will be holden on Monday the 14th of April, the place to be announced by public advertisement.

Resolved, That it is fit and proper, and the duty of this Society, to send an answer to the London Corresponding Society.

Ordered, That the Secretary acquaint the London Corresponding Society, that we have received their communication, and heartily concur with them in the objects they have in view; and that, for the purpose of a more speedy and effectual co-operation, we invite them to send to this Society, next Friday evening, a delegation of some of their members.

At a Meeting, 4th April, 1794.

Read a letter from the Committee of the London Corresponding Society, acquainting this Society that they had deputed [several persons] to hold a conference with the members of this Society. Five persons attended from the London Corresponding Society.

Resolved, That a delegation of five members of this Society be appointed to meet the members deputed by the London Corresponding Society.

VOL. IV.

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Resolved

Resolved, That this deputation do confer with the deputies of the London Corresponding Society.

Resolved, That there be appointed a committee of correspondence of the members of this Society.

Ordered, That [six persons] compose the committee.

At a Meeting, 11th April, 1794.

Mr. ——— made the report of the meeting of the delegates of the London Corresponding Society, for the purpose of this Society co-operating with the London Corresponding Society; and that they had come to the following resolutions:—

1st, Resolved, That it appears to this committee very desirable that a general meeting or convention of the Friends of Liberty should be called, for the purpose of taking into consideration the proper methods of obtaining a full and fair representation of the people.

2d, Resolved, That it is recommended to the Society for Constitutional Information, and the London Corresponding Society, to institute a regular and pressing correspondence with all those parts of the country where such measures may be likely to be promoted, not only to instigate the societies already formed, but to endeavour also to produce such other associations as may further the general object.

Resolved, That it appears to this committee, that the general object will be much promoted, if a standing committee of co-operation between the two Societies were established, for the purpose of holding personal communication with such members of similar societies, in other parts of the country, as may occasionally be in London, and who may be authorised by their respective societies to act with such committees.

Read the following letter from the Secretary to the London Corresponding Society.

Citizen,

April 10, 1794.

I am ordered by the committee of delegates of the London Corresponding Society, to inform the Society for Constitutional Information, that they approve of the Resolutions of the committee of conference.

Therefore the London Corresponding Society have chosen [five persons] to put in practice immediately the second and third resolutions of the committee.

(Signed)

———, Secretary.

———, Secretary to the Society
for Constitutional Information.

Resolved, That the report of the committee of delegates from the London Corresponding Society, and of this Society, be entered on the books of this Society.

1st, Resolved, That it appears to this Society very desirable that a general meeting of the Friends of Liberty should be called,
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for the purpose of taking into consideration the proper methods of obtaining a full and fair representation of the people,

2d, Resolved, That it appears to this Society, that the general object will be much promoted if a standing committee of co-operation were established, for the purpose of holding personal communication with such members of similar societies in other parts of the country, as may occasionally be in London, and who may be authorised by their respective societies to act with such committees.

3d, Resolved, That the committee of correspondence already appointed by this Society be the committee for co-operation and communication with the committees of other Societies.

Ordered, That the Secretary be desired to send a letter to the London Corresponding Society, acquainting them with the members of this Society appointed to confer with them.

Resolved, That Mr. — be requested to accept of the office of secretary to the committee of correspondence.

Mr. —, being present, accepted of the said office.

At a Meeting, 9th May, 1794.

Read a pamphlet, containing certain proceedings of the London Corresponding Society.

Resolved, That two thousand of the same be printed by this Society.

APPENDIX D.

Copy of a Letter from the Society for Constitutional Information at Sheffield, to the Editors of the English Chronicle.

Gentlemen,

Sheffield, 15th January, 1792.

THE Society for Constitutional Information now established at Sheffield, in the county of York, being desirous of forming a connection with all the like Societies in England, and especially with those, or some of them, in London, the Thatched House, the London Tavern, or others, humbly solicits your advice and assistance in the accomplishing thereof, in order to form our Resolves similar to theirs; because, as we are actuated by the same cause and principle, and all our interests being one, our sentiments ought and must be the same.

Your information of the method, terms, and manner of application, for the above purpose, as likewise to have one of our friends admitted a member of theirs, so as a regular communication may be carried on between us, being directed to me, will be esteemed a particular favour, and gratefully acknowledged by this Society; and the expence incurred by your attention to this business shall be duly paid to

your order, either to the postmaster here, or as you may please to direct, for and by order of this Society.

I am respectfully

Your sincere Friend —————.

[The following paragraphs are added in the same hand.]

As the manner of our beginning to associate on this occasion was somewhat singular, we beg your permission to mention a few remarks thereon.

It first originated in an assembly of five or six mechanics, who, by their meeting at some one of their houses, and *conversing about the enormous high price of provisions, &c.*—the gross abuses this nation labours under from the unbounded authority of the *monopolisers* of all ranks, *from the King to the Peasant*; the waste and lavish of the public property by placemen, pensioners, luxury, and debauchery, sources of the grievous burthen under which this nation groans; together with the mock representation of the people—these being the subjects of their conversation, they concluded that nothing but darkness and ignorance in the people could suffer the natural rights of every freeman to be thus violated; and this excited them to invite and to visit their neighbours, whence a small society of *twenty or thirty* soon commenced, and kept increasing, so that they were obliged to divide into separate bodies; and, at this time, they have formed *eight of these smaller societies*, which meet each at their different houses, *all on the same evening*: this preserved good order, and none are admitted without his ticket, that they are perfectly safe from being intruded upon, and perfect regular good order kept up; these meet every two weeks. Their general meeting, at which some hundreds attend, is held once a month, at [a part here appears to be torn off]; but true knowledge will progressively extend itself, with the same effect, throughout this whole nation, as it hath hitherto done here. We have now in the press a re-publication of *Paine's Rights of Man*, for 1,600 Copies, by 1,400 Subscribers, at the low price of Six Pence each copy, to which we purpose to annex an abstract of the noted iniquitous Corn Bill of last year.

We have also had an impression here of that famous Address, signed by J. H. Tooke, Esq. Chairman; whose address we should like to be favoured with.

Please to favour us with your answer to the above as soon as convenient; and if you can form any thing from the above, worthy of your truly-laudable paper, you are at liberty; but as it was not thought of at our meeting, it is not properly methodized and adjusted, as it stands, for that purpose—we mean, in future, to trouble you with something of the kind for that purpose.

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Copy of a Letter from the Secretary to the London Corresponding Society to the Chairman of the Society for Constitutional Information.

Sir,

Thursday, 14th March, 1792.

The Delegates of the Corresponding Society think it their duty to acquaint you, without delay, of the subscription begun on Monday last, at this place, for the defence of the prosecution said to be commenced against your worthy member Mr. Thomas Paine, in consequence of his valuable publication, intitled The Rights of Man.

The Division assembled here on that evening amounted to about twenty persons. At the desire of one of our members, Mr. Paine's letter to Mr. Secretary Dundas was read; after which the subscription was proposed, and immediately signed by every one present: we have just learnt that the Division No 5 of this Society likewise begun their subscription on Tuesday last.—It is our intention to recommend to each of our several Divisions the pursuance of the same laudable design; and we doubt not but that a numerous body of our countrymen will be found to follow an example so just in itself, and so essential to the support of that small portion of liberty which the people of England are supposed to enjoy. The approbation and the encouragement which our feeble endeavours have met with from the Constitutional Society, make us desirous of uniting more strongly and more immediately with you.—For this purpose we wish that six of our members might be admitted amongst you, after the manner of those whom you received from the Societies established at Sheffield and Norwich.—Conceiving that, should this plan be adopted generally, it could not fail to strengthen the cause in which we are engaged, we beg the favour of you to propose it at your next meeting, and to return us the decision of your Society thereupon.

I am, Sir, with great attachment and esteem,

Your most obedient Servant,

—————, Secretary.

Copy of a Letter from the Sheffield Society to Mr. ———, the Secretary to the Society for Constitutional Information.

Sheffield Society for Constitutional Information.

Sir,

It is now about four months since this Society first formed itself into a regular body, then but very few in number; the enclosed will inform you of their increase, and which is most probable will soon become very numerous; and not only this large and populous town, but the whole neighbourhood for many miles round about, have an attentive eye upon us; most of the towns and villages indeed are forming themselves into similar associations, and strictly adhere to the mode of copying after us: you will easily conceive the necessity for the leading members of this body to pay strict attention to good order and regularity, and the need we have of consulting and communicating with those who are sincere friends and able advocates for the same cause; for these reasons we took the liberty

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to write to Mr. Horne Tooke, that worthy friend and patriot for the rights of the people, informing him of our earnest desires of entering into a connection with the Society of the same denomination with ours in London: his very obliging and affectionate answer favours us with your address; in consequence we have taken the liberty herewith to transmit to you some Resolves which was passed at our last meetings by the whole body; and the Committee was charged with the dispatch of printing and forwarding them to you accordingly, for the purpose of submitting them to the consideration of your Society, to make such use of them as they think most prudent.

You will also notice the *Belpar Address*; they applied to us about two months ago for instructions as to our mode of conducting, &c. had not then formed themselves into any regular association. Belpar is nearly thirty miles from this place, in Derbyshire, and eight or ten miles from Derby.

If the Society for Constitutional Information in London should vouchsafe so far to notice us as to enter into a connection and correspondence with us, it cannot fail of promoting honour and adding strength to our feeble endeavours, and to the common cause, which is the entire motive we have in view,

I am, Sir,

With the greatest respect and esteem,

Your sincere friend,

Sheffield,
14th May, 1792.

By Order of }
the Committee }

We have taken the liberty of enclosing a parcel for Mr. — in answer to a letter from him to this Society, requesting some information concerning our method of conducting the business we are embarked in, &c. also informing us there are in London a number of mechanics, shopkeepers, &c. forming themselves into a Society on the broad basis of the *Rights of Man*. You will be so obliging as to let the packet remain with you until he call for it, as by this post I have wrote him thereof. We have given him our manner of proceeding, from our setting out to this time, and hope it may be of some use: the improvement we are about to adopt is certainly the best for managing large bodies, as in great and populous towns, viz. dividing them into small bodies or meetings of ten persons each, and these ten to appoint a delegate: ten of these delegates form another meeting, and so on, delegating from one to another, till at last are reduced to a proper number for constituting the Committee, or Grand Council.

Please to forward the packet to Mr. — as soon as convenient.

Copy of a Letter from the Society for Constitutional Information at Sheffield, to the Society for Constitutional Information in London.
Gentlemen,

This Society, feeling as they do the grievous effects of the present State defects, and abuse of our country, the great and heavy

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heavy oppressions which the common mass of the people labour under as the natural consequence of that corruption; and, at the same time being sensible to a degree of certainty, that the public minds, and the general sentiments of the people are determined to obtain **A RADICAL REFORM OF THE COUNTRY**, as soon as *prudence and discretion* will permit, believes it their duty to make use of every prudent means, as far as their abilities can be extended, to obtain so salutary and desirable an object as a *thorough Reformation of our Country, established upon that system which is consistent with the Rights of Man*. For these reasons, with great deference and submission to the members of the Society for Constitutional Information in London, we beg leave to request that they will be pleased to admit the persons of the following names, annexed hereto, as Members of their Society (they being our friends, and Members of our Society), in order that a close connection may be formed, and a regular communication maintained, between the two bodies; that being thus strengthened, this Society may be better enabled to govern itself with more propriety, and to render assistance to their fellow-citizens in this neighbourhood, and in parts more remote; that they, in their turn, may extend useful knowledge still further, *from town to village, and from village to town, until the whole nation be sufficiently enlightened, and united in the same cause, which cannot fail of being the case wherever the most excellent works of Mr. Thomas Paine finds residence.*

I am, Gentlemen,

Your most respectful and sincere Friend,

Sheffield,
14th March, 1792.

By order of }
the Committee, }

Secretary for this Society.

Names of the twelve members of the Society for Constitutional Information in Sheffield, requested to be entered as members of the Society of the same denomination in London.

Copy of a Letter from the Sheffield Society for Constitutional Information, to the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society, received 19th March, 1792.

Sir,

Your letter of the 8th instant to Mr. _____ was yesterday handed to us by means of that gentleman: he is not a member of this Society, and therefore cannot perfectly answer your request respecting the rules and orders of this Society. It affords us infinite satisfaction that the people in London are beginning to form themselves into orderly Societies, and taking into their consideration the great importance and the necessity of a *reform of the corrupt state of our government*; a work, than which none is
more

more needful in this nation, for the relief of the oppressed: the noble observation in yours, is worthy of the acceptance of all, viz. "That no man who is an advocate from principle for the liberty of a black man, but will strenuously promote and support the rights of a white man, and vice versa."

The inclosed, sent to Mr. ——— as below, will inform you of the principles we set out upon, when at first a very small number, some four or five of us, meeting in each other's houses in an evening, consulting and condoling the very low, and even miserable, condition the people of this nation were reduced to, by the avariciousness and extortion of that haughty, voluptuous, and luxurious class of beings, who would have us to possess no more knowledge than to believe all things were created only for the use of that small groupe of worthless individuals. With these sentiments, and perusing Mr. Paine's Rights of Man, maturely considering the force and weight of argument therein contained, by degrees became confirmed in our judgment, that pride, ambition, luxury, and oppression, with every vice, appeared to be at the height, or nearly at the utmost stretch; and admitting this to be the case (as we really do believe it is) we may with the greatest probability *expect it cannot be very long before a great and perhaps a general change will take place*, which will redound with more happiness to the people, as their manners and moral practices are more consistent to the Divine will of the all-wise Disposer of all things, in heaven and on earth.

On these principles our numbers kept increasing, so that we found it necessary, for the sake of good order, to *divide ourselves into small bodies, of ten persons each*, and to hold a general meeting once a month; but of late our numbers have increased so rapidly, and only having thirteen meeting places all of the same evening, they are so crowded, that we are adopting the plan we first set out with, and to divide the whole (which do now consist of about 2,000 members) into tithings, or meetings of ten members each; ---two hundred of these meetings will include the whole, from each of which a delegate or leading man will be chosen, and appointed to attend at their respective places----ten at each these 200 delegates will form twenty meetings, of ten members each; and lastly, from each of these meetings a delegate will be appointed to meet at the appointed place; and these will form the Committee, or the Grand Council: by this method, order and regularity will be maintained; and by this method a regular communication throughout the whole nation might be kept up with the most perfect harmony---and we would particularly recommend it to you in London as worthy your adoption. As you increase in numbers, necessity will confirm these sentiments. We shall be glad at any time to correspond, and be in close connection with you; as our cause is one, so ought our sentiments to be unanimous; we also would recommend you to enter into connection with the members of the Society for Constitutional

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Constitutional information in London, of whom Mr. ——— is one; and we are fully assured that gentleman will be the true friend and advocate in our cause, consistent with his principles hitherto manifested, both in public and private. We have enclosed a packet directed to you, with a parcel to Mr. ———, in ———, who is Secretary for the said Society, and who will deliver it to you when you call for it, containing some information.

Copy of Resolutions transmitted to the Society for Constitutional Information.

At a meeting of the Delegates of the United Constitutional Societies, held the 24th of March, 1792, at the Wheel of Fortune, Saint Edmund's, in the city of Norwich, it was unanimously agreed to communicate to the gentlemen of the London Society for Constitutional Information the following resolutions.

1st. We are happy to see the success of the Sheffield Society for Constitutional Reform, and approve of the *Delegations which you and they have made*, in order to form a plan of *General Information*; we humbly beg that you would grant to us the same favour; and it is our wish that all the Societies of a similar kind in England were only as so many members *strongly and indissolubly united in one political body*.

2dly. We believe that instructing the people in political knowledge, and in their natural and inherent rights as men, is the only effectual way to obtain the grand object of Reform; for men need only be made acquainted with the abuses of government, and they will readily join in every lawful means to obtain redress. We have the pleasure to inform you that our Societies consist of *some hundreds*; and *new societies are frequently forming, which by delegates preserve a mutual intercourse with each other for instruction and information*; and the greatest care has been taken to preserve order and regularity at our meetings, to convince the world that riot and disorder are no parts of our political creed.

3dly. We believe, and are firmly persuaded, that Mr. Burke (the once friend of Liberty) has traduced the greatest and most glorious Revolution ever recorded in the annals of history. We thank Mr. Burke for the political discussion provoked, and by which he has opened unto us the dawn of a glorious day.

4thly. To Mr. Thomas Paine our thanks are especially due, for his *first and second Part of the Rights of Man*; and we sincerely wish that he may live to see his labours crowned with success in the *general diffusion of liberty and happiness among mankind*.

5thly. We view, with concern, the late discoveries relative to the Westminster election, in 1788; and conceive ourselves, and all true friends of freedom, under great obligations to Messrs. Thomson, Wyndham, Francis, Taylor, and all the noble and spirited MINORITY, for their exertions in order to discover the true source of that abominable and iniquitous procedure.

6thly. We congratulate our brethren in the various parts of the kingdom, on the progress of political knowledge, and earnestly intreat them to increase *their associations, in order to form one grand and extensive union of all the friends of general liberty*—and we hope the time is not far distant, when the people of England will be equally and faithfully represented in parliament.

Signed by order,

_____, Chairman.

Copy of a Letter from the Secretary to the London Corresponding Society to the President of the Society for Constitutional Information.

Sir,

I am ordered by the Committee to send to the Society for Constitutional Information, in London, a copy of our motives for associating, and the resolutions we have come to. We mean to persevere in the cause we have embarked in; that is, to have (if possible) an equal representation of the people of this nation in parliament.

We should be exceedingly happy to enter into a correspondence with that Society, if it is not too much presumption in us to expect such an honour; but as our cause is one, we hope that they will deign to take some notice of us, who are now entering upon a matter of such vast importance.

You will see, by one of our resolutions, that we have entered into a correspondence with the Society at Sheffield.

I am, Sir,

With all deference,

Your most obedient

March 30th, 1792.

and most humble Servant,

Copy of a Letter from Lord John Russell to J. Cartwright, Esq. Chairman of the Society for Constitutional Information.

Sir,

Fully sensible that the Society for Constitutional Information have made no sacrifice to delicacy in their address to us, we on our part shall affect no disguise.

Voluntary associations not being armed with public authority, have no force but that of truth, no hope of success but in the strength of reason, and the concurrence of the public.

We profess not to entertain a wish "that the great plan of public benefit which Mr. Paine has so powerfully recommended will speedily be carried into effect," nor to amuse our fellow-citizens with the magnificent promise of obtaining for them "the rights of the people in their full extent:"—the indefinite language of delusion, which by opening unbounded prospects of political adventure tends to destroy that public opinion which is the support of all free governments, and to excite a spirit of innovation

innovation of which no wisdom can foresee the effects, and no skill direct the course. We view man as he is, the creature of habit, as well as of reason. We think it therefore our bounden duty to propose no extreme changes, which, however specious in theory, can never be accomplished without violence to the settled opinions of mankind, nor attempted without endangering some of the most estimable advantages which we confessedly enjoy. We are convinced that the people bear a fixed attachment to the happy form of our government, and the genuine principles of our constitution; these we cherish as objects of just affection, not from any implicit reverence, or habitual superstition, but as institutions best calculated to produce the happiness of man in civil society: and it is because we are convinced that abuses are undermining and corrupting them, that we have associated for the preservation of those principles.

"We wish to reform the Constitution, because we wish to preserve it."

Associations formed in the face of power, in opposition to the interests of our present legislators, evince that *individual* security and *personal* independence are already established by our laws.

The immense accumulation of debt, the enormous taxation of seventeen millions of annual revenue, demonstrate that the *collective* interests of the community have been neglected or betrayed.

We believe the defective constitution of the assembly entrusted with the public purse, to be the real source of this evil. With this view we have pledged ourselves to attempt a timely and salutary reform, adhering in every measure we may take to the fundamental principles of the Constitution. According to those acknowledged principles, the people have a perfect right to possess an organ, by which the public mind may speak in legislation; and to bind their representatives to the interests of the whole community, by a frequent renovation of the trust. These objects accomplished, we believe abuses will find no protection in a genuine representation of the people; that regulations best adapted to the public happiness will be gradually infused into our laws, through the known channels of legislation: and that the agitated minds of men, resuming their confidence in parliament, will subside into a calm expectation of redress, without forgetting the principles or violating the form of the Constitution.

These, as we think, are the views of men detesting anarchy, yet sincere friends of the people. Your letter appears to us to be written with a view to create distrust of our designs, to insinuate doubts of sincerity, and to excite an early suspicion of our principles in the minds of the people. We have not, however, refused, in answer, to disclaim what we condemn, and to avow our real objects, from the pursuit of which we will not suffer ourselves to be diverted by any controversy. We must

beg leave, at the same time, to decline all future intercourse with a Society whose views and objects, as far as we can collect them from the various resolutions and proceedings which have been published, we cannot help regarding as irreconcilable with those real interests on which you profess to inform and enlighten the people.

(Signed) JOHN RUSSEL, Chairman.

Freemasons Tavern,
Saturday, May 12th, 1792.

Freemasons Tavern, May 12th, 1792.

At a General Meeting of the Society of the Friends of the People associated for the purpose of obtaining Parliamentary Reform,

The Right Honourable Lord John Russel in the Chair,

Resolved, That the proceedings of this day, including the letter from the Society for Constitutional Information, and the answer of this Society to that letter, be printed and published.

Resolved, That, together with the answer of this Society to the letter of the Society for Constitutional Information, there be transmitted to John Cartwright, Esquire, Chairman of that Society, a copy of the Resolution of the Society of the Friends of the People, to print and publish the letter and reply.

JOHN RUSSEL, Chairman.

Copy of a Letter from Stockport to the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society. Received 17th Sept. 1792.

Dear Sir,

In obedience to the wishes of the Society here, I have the pleasure of acknowledging the honour of your letter, and the packet which the kindness of our brothers of the London Corresponding Society so opportunely presented us with.

It is doubly deserving our thanks, as it shews your kindness, and as it will be useful in the formation of our infant Society: we stand much in need of your experience in this particular, and we doubt not of your best assistance. We are surrounded by a majority, a formidable one indeed, in power, abilities, and numbers; but we are not dismayed.

We have carefully perused the addresses; and I am to observe on their contents in general, that the sentiments *hardly rise to that height which we expect from men, sensible of their full claims to absolute and uncontrollable liberty, i. e. unaccountable to any power which they have not immediately constituted and appointed.*

These are our sentiments, whatever may be yours, though in the present state of political knowledge *it may be prudent not to avow them openly.* We desire your sentiments on the means of accomplishing that object which we presume you have in view in common with us. We think it expedient that we should perfectly understand each other in the beginning, lest the appearance of disunion might furnish matter of triumph to our enemies. We observe one expression, which says, "Numerous other reforms

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"would undoubtedly take place, &c. &c." But we ask, how is that Parliament to be chosen? Can we expect it from the present order of things? *Would not all the evil be done away at once by the people assembled in Convention?* Does it appear probable, that the odious laws which we complain of will be abolished any other way? Can the grievances arising from Aristocracy be redressed, while the ——— retains its present authority in the legislature? Is the universal right of conscience ever to be attained, while the B—— maintain their seats on the ———.

Your thoughts on these important points we most earnestly desire may be transmitted to us as soon as possible: not directed as the last; we fear it will excite suspicion. Direct to Mr. ———, Stockport, who is chairman occasionally in the absence of ———, who resides too far from hence to be at hand on emergencies.

Yours, &c.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. Margarot to the Friends of Universal Peace, and of the Rights of Man Society, at Stockport.

London, 11th October, 1792.

Sir,

With infinite satisfaction the London Corresponding Society Committee perused your letter: they are happy to learn your steady determination, spite of all obstacles, to pursue that sole means of political felicity, a perfect representation of the people.

With regard to our publications, our sentiments are expressed in as strong terms as prudence will permit, yet plain enough we imagine to convince the public that while we expect every thing from an honest and an annual Parliament, nothing short of such a senate, chosen by the whole nation, will satisfy us.

True generosity, the characteristic of this nation, and of all unpurged men throughout the globe, calling upon us to countenance, at this juncture, the arduous struggle of the French nation against despotism and aristocracy, those foes to the human race, we have resolved upon addressing the French National Convention.

Without entering into the probable effects of such a measure, effects which your Society will not fail to discover, we invite you to join us; and to that end herewith you have a copy of our intended address; if you approve the idea, and will concur in sending it, be pleased to return us without delay a copy, signed by your President and Secretary, or by the delegates, stating each for how many persons he signs; we will then associate your body with ours, and with some others who have already assented to the measure.—If, on the contrary, you disapprove that mark of zeal towards the only nation that has hitherto undertaken to restore to mankind its just rights, please to communicate to us your objections.

I am, Sir, for the Committee of Delegates,

Yours, &c.

M. M. Ch.

Copy of a Letter from the Editors of the Patriot to the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society.

Sir,

Sheffield, October 15th, 1792.

Having nothing particular to communicate to your Society at the time of the publication of our last number, we contented ourselves with a general acknowledgement of the receipt of your favour. We now gladly embrace this opportunity of especially thanking you for the same, and at the same time assuring you, that the communications you sent us shall appear in the next number of the Patriot.

We beg leave also to throw in our mite of commendation of the laudable spirit which you have evinced, in your intention to address the National Convention of France; and hope sincerely, that your example will be followed by all the Societies in the two kingdoms, Ireland having already set the example.

Within these few days we have received a letter from the Secretary of a Society intended to be formed at Stockport, a very populous manufacturing town, only seven miles from Manchester, a copy of which we think it necessary to send you herewith, by which you will see the unjustifiable opposition which is making by the enemies to a reform, and the friends and tools of arbitrary power, against the increase of those Societies, and the attempt to crush and annihilate our efforts in the cause of freedom in the very bud. We thought it our duty to answer the letter immediately, in order to give them every encouragement within the scope of our feeble abilities; and herewith also send your Society a copy of our letter on that occasion; but we are apprehensive that the voice of a few individuals may not have weight enough to answer the wished-for end, of inspiring them with sufficient confidence to persevere. *We hope your Society will also give them your sanction, advice, and support*, as it will be in vain for the friends to reform to contend with the tremendous host of enemies they have to encounter, unless they firmly on all occasions stand by and succour one another.

It is with the greatest satisfaction we announce to you, that several Societies have been formed within the last three weeks in Edinburgh, not less than seven or eight; and also that a patriotic print is about to make its appearance, under the direction of Major Johnson, who is also President of one of the Societies. We have received some most spirited communications from thence; and our bookseller has sent an order for 50 additional numbers of every publication of our work more than what was before in circulation, with an assurance that it was daily increasing in fame and demand for it. We clearly foresee that Scotland will soon take the lead of this country, and conceive it will be necessary to take the greatest care that an universal communication should be constantly kept up between the several Societies, however distant, and that all should determine to act upon the same principle,

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ciple, and move together, as near as may be, in regular and active unison. 'Twas by this method France became so thoroughly united; and we ought never to lose sight of it.

The Sheffield Society has been lately revised and re-organized; and in a very short time they will present the public with an address, and a set of rules, regulations, and resolves, which I think will do them infinite credit.

We shall be happy to hear from your Society on every occasion that may be agreeable and convenient; and any communications which in future they may wish to convey to the public through the medium of *The Patriot*, they may rely on it every attention and regard shall be paid to them.

We remain, with great respect,

Fellow-Citizen,

Yours most respectfully,

The Editors of the *Patriot*.

Copy of a Letter from Leicester to the Secretary of the Society for Constitutional Information.

Sir,

Leicester, 9th November, 1792.

As I have not yet heard from you, I hope you will not omit my request, and forward every necessary particular by the first mail.

We are to have our first adjourned meeting on Monday evening next; and I wish our Secretary to be well prepared to meet every expectation, and every objection.

We shall stand in need of a sort of creed for immediate publication.

I am, &c.

Copy of a Letter from the Society for Political Information at Norwich to the Secretary to the London Corresponding Society.

Mr. Secretary,

Norwich, November 11th, 1792.

Sir,

We, the Society for Political Information, are desirous of holding and strenuously supporting the noble sentiments which you so lately and friendly dispersed among us; and as we so much admire your well-adopted plan for a reformation in the State, permit us, with the utmost deference to your worthy Society, to participate with you in all your great national correspondence, which your very name promises to maintain; and in consequence thereof, it is humbly desired, by the Society which I have the happiness to represent, to incorporate three members with your worthy fraternity; in doing which I shall here inform you of their names and residence, which are as follows,

Our principal design in doing this, is, that we may have an opportunity of knowing more exactly what may be thought the most eligible steps to be taken in carrying on this great business of our associated brethren, and to have an opportunity to assist

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sort of questions as may be thought very reasonable among the brethren; especially when we think that publications are covered with a sort of obscurity in it, as the Sheffield people's declaration, which seemed determined to support the Duke of Richmond's plan only; but since we find, in a printed letter received from them in a book, that they mean to abide by some moderate reform, as may hereafter be brought forward by the Friends of the People, which method is uncertain to us. Again, we find that the Friends of the People, and the Society for Constitutional Information, do not exactly agree;—we could be glad to know the reason. It seems to me as though the difference was this:—The Friends of the People mean only a partial reform, because they leave out the words expressing the Duke of Richmond's plan, and talk only of a reform; while the Manchester people seem to intimate by addressing Mr. Paine, as though they were intent upon republican principles only. Now, to come closer to the main question, it is only desired to know whether the generality of the Societies mean to rest satisfied with the Duke of Richmond's plan only; OR WHETHER IT IS THEIR PRIVATE DESIGN TO RIP UP MONARCHY BY THE ROOTS, AND PLACE DEMOCRACY IN ITS STEAD. I shall now, Sir, give you an exact account of what plan I could wish to obtain, which I have already moved for at our General Meeting, viz. a full and equal Representation of the whole body of the People, a general Suffrage of Votes, and Annual Parliaments. I remember the Society for Constitutional Information intimated to us that Mr. — used to write to them in the name of the Revolution Society: if you approve of that appellation, pray be so kind as to give us a full and satisfactory answer. I shall say no more at present, but remain a friend to peace, not to anarchy; a well-wisher to the rights of man, when obtained by consent; and your most obedient, &c.

Copy of a Letter from Manchester to the Secretary of the Society for Constitutional Information.

Sir,

Manchester, November 13th, 1792.

The Manchester Reformation Society, being convinced that the cause of freedom will be much promoted by opening a correspondence with the different Patriotic Societies in this kingdom, have therefore thought it necessary to address your Society for this purpose.

The cause of Liberty goes on rapidly in this town; our Society meets weekly, and we enter several new members every time. We should have been more numerous, had not the influence of the Aristocrats hunted us out of the public house where we met; but we hope this step will be no ways detrimental in the end, for we presently rallied our members, and took a private house to meet in, where we have met some time past: we are just going to publish a fresh declaration; and we have not the least doubt but, when it appears, it will be the means of increasing our Society prodigiously.

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We shall deem it as a great favour if you would send us any information that you may think worth communication, and may rest assured that we shall always be proud of any opportunity by which it may be in our power to return the favour.

(Signed) ———

Secretary to the Reformation Society.

Please to direct to Mr. Gorse, No. 7, Great Newton-street, near New Cross, Manchester.

Copy of a Letter from Leicester to the Secretary of the Society for Constitutional Information.

Sir,

I sent a letter per Mail as a parcel, requesting you to send me every particular requisite to enable us to establish a constitutional society at Leicester, similar to yours, and those at Manchester, Stockport, &c.

Send me, if you please, all that is necessary by *first mail*: we want laws, orders, principles, creeds, addresses, declarations, resolutions, &c.

I am, Sir,

(In great haste)

Leicester,
Nov. 15th, 1792.

Your humble servant,
—————

Copy of a Letter from Coventry to the Secretary of the Society for Constitutional Information.

Sir,

At a meeting which was last week convened for the purpose of instituting a society for constitutional information, it was determined by the persons present to form themselves into a society for that purpose: as it was thought expedient that a plan should be adopted, which would be calculated to produce the object of the institution, the society resolved that they would apply to the Constitutional Society in London; and at their request I have now taken the liberty of soliciting you would be so kind as to transmit to us a copy of the plan of the Sheffield or any other society, which *you may think best adapted* to produce the end of the institution. Your compliance with the request will not only be a sanction to the institution, but will be attended with the salutary effect which results from such institutions.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,
—————

P. S. Our corporation has been apprised of our intention of forming a constitutional society; and have threatened us with a prosecution; but we are determined to persevere in our intention.

Coventry,
Nov. 26th, 1792.

VOL. IV.

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The

The inclosed hand bill, which we *privately circulated here some time since*, has so exasperated our corporation, that they now declare they will punish us with that rigour and severity which the proclamation has empowered them with.

Copy of a Letter from the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society to the Secretary of the Society for Constitutional Information.

Sir,

London, 30th Nov. 1792.

I am directed by the Committee of Delegates of the London Corresponding Society, to send your society the inclosed copy of an Address they are forthwith going to publish, as an answer to the sophistical Address lately sent forth from the Association for the preservation of property, &c. from the inroads of levellers and republicans.

I am,

With great esteem,

Dear Sir,

Your very humble servant,

———— Secretary.

Address of the London Corresponding Society to the other Societies in Great Britain, united for the obtaining a Reform in Parliament.

Friends, and fellow countrymen,

Unless we are greatly deceived, the time is approaching when the object for which we struggle is likely to come within our reach. That a nation like Britain should be free, it is requisite only that Britons should will it to become so—that such should be their will, the abuses of our original constitution, and the alarms of our aristocratic enemies, sufficiently witness. Confident in the purity of our motives, and in the justice of our cause, let us meet falsehood with proofs, and hypocrisy with plainness; let us persevere in declaring our principles, and misrepresentation will meet its due reward—Contempt.

In this view the artifices of a late aristocratic association, formed on the 20th instant, call for a few remarks, on account of the declaration they have published relative to other clubs and societies formed in this nation. It is true that this meeting of gentlemen (for so they style themselves) have mentioned no names, instanced no facts, quoted no authorities; but they take upon themselves to assert that bodies of their countrymen have been associated, professing opinions favourable to the RIGHTS OF MAN, to LIBERTY and EQUALITY; and moreover that those opinions are conveyed in the Terms, NO KING, NO PARLIAMENT.—So much for their assertions.

If this be intended to include the societies to which we respectively belong, we here in the most solemn manner deny the latter

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part of the charge, while, in admitting the former, we claim the privilege, and glory in the character of Britons. Whoever shall attribute to us the expressions of NO KING, NO PARLIAMENT, or any design of invading the property of other men, is guilty of a wilful, an impudent, and a malicious falsehood.

We know and are sensible that the wages of every man are his right; that difference of strength, of talents, and of industry, do and ought to afford proportionable distinctions of property, which, when acquired, and confirmed by the laws, is sacred and inviolable. We defy the most slavish and malevolent man in the meeting of the 20th instant to bring the remotest proof to the contrary. If there be no proof, we call upon them to justify an insidious calumny, which seems invented only to terrify independent Britons from reclaiming the rightful constitution of their country. We admit and we declare that we are friends to CIVIL LIBERTY, and therefore to NATURAL EQUALITY, both of which we consider as the RIGHTS OF MANKIND. Could we believe them to be "in direct opposition to the laws of this land," we should blush to find ourselves among the number of its inhabitants. But we are persuaded that the abuses of the constitution will never pass current for its true principles; since we are told in its first charter that ALL ARE EQUAL IN THE SIGHT OF THE LAW, which "shall neither be sold, nor refused, nor delayed to any free man whatsoever." Should it ever happen that "right and justice" are opposed by expence, by refusal, or by delay, then is this principle of equality violated, and we are no longer free men.

Such are our notions of those rights which it is boldly maintained "are inconsistent with the well-being of society:" But let us not suffer men who avow no principles of liberty, whose favourite cry is inequality of property, to estrange others of our countrymen from aiding us in serving the community, and from recovering to the nation that share of its sovereignty which has unhappily been sacrificed to corrupt courtiers and intriguing boroughmongers.

If our laws and constitution be just and wise in their origin and their principle, every deviation from them, as first established, must be injurious to the people whose persons and property were then secured; if at the Revolution this country was adequately represented, it is now so no longer, and therefore calls aloud for reform.

If it be true that the people of Britain are superior to other nations, is it that our taxes are less burthen some? or that our provisions are less expensive? Is it from the various productions of our soil that we are rich? Is it owing to the majority of our numbers that we are strong?—Certainly not. France has the advantage in all these respects, and up to this period she has never been our superior in wealth, in power, in talents, or in virtue. But let us not deceive ourselves, the difference between us and
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that nation was formerly that our monarchy was limited, while theirs was absolute—that the number of our aristocracy did not equal the thousandth part of theirs—that we had trial by jury, while they had none—that our persons were protected by the laws, while their lives were at the mercy of every titled individual. We, therefore, had that to fight for which to them was unknown—since we were men while they were slaves.

The scene has indeed changed—Like our brave ancestors of the last century, they have driven out the family that would have destroyed them; they have scattered the mercenaries who invaded their freedom, and have “broken their chains on the heads of their oppressors.” If, during this conflict with military assassins and domestic traitors, cruelty and revenge have arisen among a few inhabitants of the capital, let us lament these effects of a bloody and tyrannous manifesto, but let us leave to the hypocrite pretenders to humanity the task of blackening the misfortune, and attributing to a whole nation the act of an enraged populace.

As we have never yet been cast so low at the foot of despotism, so it is not requisite that we should appeal to the same awful tribunal with our brethren on the Continent. May our enmities be written in sand, but may our rights be engraven on marble! we desire to overthrow no property but that which has been raised on the ruins of our liberty. We look with reverence on the landed and commercial interests of our country; but we view with abhorrence that monopoly of burgage tenures unwarranted by law or reason in this or any other nation in Europe.

Let us then continue, with patience and firmness, in the path which is begun. *Let us wait and watch the ensuing sessions of parliament, from whom we have much to hope, and little to fear. The House of Commons may have been the source of our calamity, it may prove that of our deliverance. Should it not, we trust we shall not prove unworthy of our forefathers, whose exertions in the cause of mankind so well deserve our imitation.*

(Signed) MAURICE MARGAROT, Chairman.
London, _____, Secretary.
29th Nov. 1792.

Appendix

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Appendix E.

Copy of a Letter from the Constitutional Society at Sheffield to the Secretary of the Society for Constitutional Information.

Sheffield Society for Constitutional Information.

Committee Room, January 16th, 1793.

" Resolved,

" That a circular letter be immediately forwarded by this committee to every society in Great Britain (that is known to us) which has associated for the purpose of obtaining a reform in Parliament, requesting each society to inform us in what manner they mean to come forward in support of their several declarations during the present session of Parliament."

Sir,

In consequence of the above resolution, we take the liberty of addressing your society, and of informing you that it is the opinion of this committee, that the sentiments and determination of every society in Great Britain ought to be explicitly known, and candidly declared, in order that such of them as coincide in idea on this great constitutional question may act in concert together; a circumstance which will greatly add to their strength and consequence, and which indeed appears to be indispensably requisite to be done without further delay.

We therefore beg leave to state, that in our opinion any reform will prove nugatory, or at least fall far short of the permanent and important advantages to the country and constitution which we have in view, that does not consist of a *restoration of the right of universal suffrage (except of persons not of sane mind, under the age of twenty-one years, and those incapacitated by crimes)* together with *annual elections*; and for the purpose of regaining these our rights, we propose to petition the Commons House of Parliament this session, to take into their most serious consideration the *present very inadequate state of the representation of the people of Great Britain*, and the various and great abuses resulting therefrom, and that they will take such speedy and effectual measures to remove those evils, and remedy the grievances consequent thereon, as to their wisdom shall seem most proper.

As the importance and magnitude of the question requires that no time should be lost which can possibly be avoided, we beg that your society will have the goodness to inform us how far our proposed plan meets with your approbation, or in what respect, and to what degree of extent, we differ.

At all events it appears highly necessary that the several societies in the kingdom should request to know immediately what are the express views and plans of "The Society of the Friends of the People," in order that they may be enabled to judge how far they shall be warranted in seconding and supporting the bill which Mr. Grey has given notice he means to introduce into the House of Commons, in the course of the present session, for the purpose of obtaining this great and desirable object.

Requesting

Requesting an answer as speedily as possible—we remain, with the greatest respect, in the name, and by order of the Committee,

Sir,

Your most obedient servants,

_____, President.

_____, Secretary.

Copy of a Letter from the Society for Constitutional Information at Birmingham to the Society for Constitutional Information in London.

Birmingham, February 6th, 1793.

Friends and Fellow Citizens,

The Members of the Society for Constitutional Information, established at this place, November 20th, 1792, take this opportunity of laying before you our printed address and declaration, and our rules and orders, which we have adopted from the Sheffield Society for our internal government; and to shew our justice, our moderation, and love to all mankind, we desire your advice and assistance, that the general mind of our society may be formed unanimously to the best and most likely mode of obtaining our long-lost rights as men free born, and as citizens by universal incorporation.

The interested and bigotted supporters of the exploded system of corruption are continually throwing obstacles in the way of all reform, and threaten us with rigorous prosecutions, and exhibit all the engines of power and tyranny before us for meeting to investigate the laws of our country, and endeavouring to obtain, in a legal and peaceable manner, the birthright of every Briton, (viz.) an equal representation of the people in Parliament, notwithstanding which numbers daily flock to the Standard of Liberty. We are determined, in spite of all base opposition, to persevere as we have begun, in the good cause, till we have obtained the desirable end, a redress of our grievances.

We sincerely think the cause is of God, and that it would go on without our interference; but who can stand by an idle spectator, and see our fellow men struggling for us in the cause of liberty, and not have a wish to lend a helping hand in the humane and god-like work?

We ardently and sincerely desire to become instrumental in so good and great a work, the cause of liberty and of all mankind, both present and future.

The grateful thanks of our society are given to Mr. Horne Tooke, Major Cartwright, Mr. Erskine, and the rest of the members of the Constitutional Society for Information in London, for their firm and manly support and perseverance in our common cause of liberty and good will to all mankind, and their steady purpose to obtain an effectual reform in the Legislative House of the People, the Commons House of Parliament.

Our society requests the favour of your admitting the favour of twelve persons, whose names are subscribed, to be enrolled members.

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bers of your society, for the purpose of corresponding with yours and every other similar institution in the nation, for the better regulating our measures, and receiving instruction.

Wishing you all the success your laudable undertaking deserves—we are, with sincerity, your fellow citizens and friends.

[The names of the twelve persons mentioned above, and of the persons to direct to, are subjoined.]

Draught of a Letter from Mr. Margarot to the Constitutional Society at Sheffield.

Gentlemen,

12th February 1793.

The London Corresponding Society defer answering your kind letter, until they shall have been able to ascertain the sense of the whole society on the matter. They mean likewise to confer thereon with all the other societies in London, and also, if possible, to collect the ideas of the unassociated, on an object so important to us all.

I am, Gentlemen, with esteem,

Your Fellow Labourer, &c.

Copy of a Letter from the Committee of the Friends of the People to the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society.

Sir,

Frith Street, February 15, 1793.

I am directed by the Society of the Friends of the People, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated 1st February, 1793. Having pledged ourselves by our public acts and documents to use every effort in our power for the purpose of obtaining a complete, substantial, and radical reform of the representation of the people in Parliament, we never can be supposed to have surrendered to any other body of men the exercise of our own discretion with respect both to the plan which we deem most effectual for the purpose, and the time which we may think most favourable for offering it to the public; at present we think, that to make public our views on these subjects would be to furnish arms to our enemies, and to injure the cause in which we are engaged. The period, however, is probably not very far distant when these particulars will be made known to the public; it is sufficient now to express our confidence that that moment will prove, by evidence more substantial than professions, that we will propose no plan of reform which is short of an effectual destruction of *abuses* in the representation of the people, and that we have honestly exerted every faculty we possess in chusing the time most favourable to the success of our plan.

We have learned, with affliction and indignation, the arbitrary and unconstitutional interruption of meetings of citizens, peaceably and lawfully assembled, for the discussion and maintenance of their rights. We have ever viewed with utter disapprobation, both of their principles and proceedings, the associations who have been the authors or instruments of this persecution. Their principles, we think, are repugnant to the free spirit of the English law, and their conduct, we think, has been injurious and oppressive as the principle of their institution is unconstitutional and absurd

absurd. But deeply penetrated as we are with these sentiments, we neither possessed power nor legal competence to interpose for the protection of an individual, suffering even under the most unjust prosecution. We cannot, therefore, feel ourselves blameable for inaction in cases of which the particulars were never laid before us, and in which it might have been perhaps impossible, and perhaps improper, for us to have interfered.

We do not think it necessary to make any particular remarks on those publications which you have put forth. We are not called upon to pronounce any judgment on the publications of individuals or societies; and however we may lament the grievances of which some of your publications complain, our efforts must necessarily be limited to the object of an institution, the creation of an organ to speak the public voice in legislation.

We cannot help expressing some surprize at the information that societies in different parts of the kingdom, who were solicitous about the nature and extent of our plans of reform, instead of expressing such solicitude to ourselves, should have chosen the indirect and circuitous channel of any other society. Had they applied to the Friends of the People directly, they would assuredly have received every information compatible with the prudence, and with a due regard to the success of our common cause.

On the subject of your correspondence with the National Convention of France, we freely communicated to you an opinion in our last letter. We see no reason to change the sentiments which we then expressed on the prudence and tendency of that measure; for though we not only "acknowledge," but avow with pride, "that to wish success to the cause of *freedom* is congenial to the heart of a Briton," yet we cannot think that men engaged in so momentous a cause as that of parliamentary reform are entitled to make public declarations, even of their most virtuous sentiments, in manner which may injure that cause, serve the purposes, and strengthen the pretences of its enemies. Far be it from us to treat with severity and rigour even those errors and indiscretions into which men may be betrayed by a generous zeal for the cause of freedom; but surely it cannot be denied, that the correspondence of societies in this country with public bodies in France has furnished the most specious pretences to interested men for confounding a virtuous sensibility to the interests of liberty in other countries, with a criminal intention to introduce disorder and civil commotion in our own; it is chiefly by the help of this pretext that designing men have so successfully practised on the alarms of the public, and that timid honesty has been rendered the dupe and the instrument of corruption. But on this subject all further remark is now become unnecessary, as every good citizen must now feel himself precluded from all political intercourse with France (for a period which we earnestly pray may be very short) by a war, the principle of which we utterly disapprove; the inevitable evils of which we deeply deplore; and at the possible consequences of which we tremble.

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arise frequent differences of opinion and conduct; and these differences, the natural effect of an independent judgment and an independent spirit, are perfectly compatible with mutual confidence and co-operation. When, indeed, designing persons avail themselves of such differences to sow distrust, and to insinuate suspicions against the characters and intentions of men, it is then only that they become pernicious and injurious. Against practices which might produce such a spirit of disunion and distrust it is surely almost necessary to warn the friends of liberty at a moment when our enemies are so formidable and so united. They have sacrificed all inferior interests and all former differences to their common interest in perpetuating abuses and corruptions. Let it not be said, that more generous motives have a less powerful influence on the human mind, and that the love of liberty is not able to produce that union among her friends, which in her enemies has arisen from the most abject and sordid passions.

It seems scarce necessary to represent to the London Corresponding Society, the peculiar necessity of circumspection and moderation at a moment when the most venial indiscretion of the friends of reform is remarked with such malignant watchfulness, and converted into an argument against the cause of reform itself.

He must surely either be a secret enemy, or an unsafe and pernicious friend of that cause, who could prompt you to any thing that could be construed into indiscretion, or who would labour to sow distrust among the small number of those who now appear in behalf of freedom in England, at a period when a persecution is carried on against the friends of reform at home, and a war is commenced, which in its progress may combine the arms of England with those of powers engaged in a crusade against the general liberties of Europe.

In name and by order of the Committee.

Draft of a Letter from the London Corresponding Society, intended as an Answer to the foregoing Letter.

Sir,

The Committee of the London Corresponding Society have, at present, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th of February.

With pleasure we perceive your society not unwilling to keep up a correspondence with us, yet, at the same time, we are sorry that you should appear to be hurt by the plain questions we put to you in our last—to ask of you what measures you mean to pursue in a matter which concerns us all, is certainly no ways calling upon you to surrender up to our society, or even to the public at large, your discretion—nor can we conceive that a body of men having pledged themselves to the public can be a sufficient security to that public to repose implicit confidence in them without being made further acquainted with the nature and extent of the plan you mean to pursue, in order that we the people may, if we approve it, co-operate with you—the extent of your proposed reform, we apprehend, is already determined upon, and we can discover no advantage likely to result from its secrecy—on the contrary, if we

are to ask for ourselves the same thing which our friends mean to ask for us, the latter must receive their instruction from us, or we must be directed by them—in either case there must be no secrets. We further conceive that the permanency of a reform must be founded on the acquiescence of the public, who, after maturely deliberating on every thing proposed, shall have found your plan the most useful and the best that could possibly be laid down.—The business we are engaged in is of too important a nature to admit of reserve or disguise.—We will therefore, by the frankness of our behaviour, shew ourselves worthy the friendship of a society of honest men endeavouring to serve their country, and plainly tell you, our country correspondents did not desire us to inquire of you what you meant to do, but fairly asked us whether we thought you honest? whether we thought you meant to serve a party or the nation? whether we imagined you intended a partial or a complete reform? Addressed in this manner to us, and blunt as those questions may appear, they have nothing in them which can possibly offend you, the people have always an undoubted right to scrutinize the character and principles of them who call themselves their friends, and such as avow an intention of bringing forward measures in which we are all so deeply interested.—As to the furnishing our enemies with arms by a disclosure of our intention, we cannot conceive that demands founded on constitutional rights can lose any of their force by being made public. Reason (*vires acquirit eundo*) to triumph requires only to be known; and as none of the people's demands are founded on fallacy, to take the enemy by surprise would be unworthy of the public champions, and moreover, perfectly needless, when truth and reason must unavoidably bear down all before them without the assistance of guile.

Under the idea, that where you say, “You neither possessed power nor legal competence to interfere for the protection of an individual suffering under the most unjust prosecution,” you allude to the case of our bill sticker: we must beg to set you right, and to inform you we never, as a society, sought the interference of any body of men; on the contrary, we are firmly persuaded, however hard such cases may bear upon individuals, they will eventually prove of service to the public, nothing having a greater tendency towards rousing the country from its too prevalent apathy with regard to stretch of prerogative and abuse of power.

As to our address to the French National Convention, we imagine it best to say no more about it at present, only that if has furnished pretexts to designing men, it has only saved them the trouble of seeking excuses elsewhere; but such men, even without our aid, would have been at no loss; at the same time we are apt to believe the plan for war, if conceived before then, was by no means accelerated thereby—intended as preventatives, addresses might have been effectual, if they had been more generally adopted; the only fault therein, that by a mistaken idea the addressers gave credit to the nation for a greater degree of energy than it really possessed. We agree with you that unity of sentiment was no way incompatible with diversity of opinion, and that the latter

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is natural to independent minds; with same object in view, their mode of pursuing it will undoubtedly differ;—with caution, therefore, we will watch over those who wish to sow the seeds of unnecessary distrust among us, and will at the same time take good care that the doctrine of implicit confidence may not gain ground among us. Full as much as yourselves we plead the necessity of union among the friends of liberty, but lament that it is prevented, or at least retarded, in many instances, by the same thing that promotes it among the enemies of reform, namely, interest; with them all their interest is for the continuation of abuses, while to some of us a reform must be attended with pecuniary loss, and many others would lose their employ, their daily bread, were it known they took an active part:—thus the same motive, assuming on one side the appearance of a virtue gives emulation to bad men, and on the other, in its vilest but most natural form, stays the progress of those who, with the best intentions, labour to save their country.

We thank you for your kind and prudent advice, enjoining us moderation and discretion at this critical moment, when every imprudence in the advocate is liable to be rendered prejudicial to the cause itself.

Draft of a Letter from the London Corresponding Society to the Constitutional Society at Sheffield.

4th March, 1793.

The London Corresponding Society have at present to acknowledge your last, and to answer more fully your preceding letter.

With regard to petitioning parliament, we are unanimous in the opinion, that such a petition will not produce a reform; yet from many considerations we are now persuaded, that if every society in the island will send forward a petition, we shall ultimately gain ground, for as much as it will force the present members of the senate to repeatedly discuss the subject, and their deliberations, printed in the different newspapers, will most naturally awaken the public mind towards the object of our pursuit; the nation once informed that a reform in parliament is sought for from different quarters, gives rise to debates in the House of Commons, and is acknowledged by every rank to be wanting, will begin to exercise their own reason on the subject; arrived at that period, we presume our business will be nearly accomplished.

Let us closely follow up our Nottingham brethren; let every society petition separately; let every week furnish a fresh petition, and afford a fresh debate;—we seek to open the eyes of the public: petitions on our part, and rejections on the part of the ministry, will effectually do it. We therefore highly approve of your idea, and will ourselves follow it up, and recommend it to all the other societies we correspond with; and withal we recommend that no time be lost in so doing.

With you we lament the evils of an imprudent and inconsiderate war, a war rather eagerly sought for the advancement of private ends than carefully deprecated from considerations of public

good—a contest unfavourable to this country, whether either France or Despotism gain the upper hand. We join with you in gratitude to those worthy members of either House who have endeavoured to avert this national calamity, to whom we have likewise returned our public thanks—and we remain with sincerity and affection,

Your friends and fellow labourers,

Copy of a Letter from the United Societies at Norwich to the Society for Constitutional Information.

United Political Societies of Norwich, 5th March, 1793.

Gentlemen,

It is with peculiar satisfaction we are favoured with your correspondence, *not merely because you are so, although you are better fitted to diffuse knowledge, but because you are embarked in the same magnanimous cause, which demands with alacrity the attention of every individual, and it is with the utmost regret we see so many, either from ignorance or something worse, who are inimical to their own interest, for nothing contributes so much to support the oppressor as the ignorance of the oppressed, for which purpose the flood gates have been opened gradually, till by degrees the streams of corruption have nearly overflowed the land, such as bounty acts, borrowing qualification and septennial acts, besides standing armies, excise and tything laws, with various others too painful for reflection, without credit to the framers thereof, and with advantage to society. We do not presume to recapitulate these abuses for your information, but being experimentally acquainted with them, we wish to find out a method of redress. At present we see a great propriety in universal suffrage and annual elections, but we beg you will be obliging enough to inform us of what you have collected of the sense of the people by your correspondents.—We have to inform you, that our worthy corresponding societies of London have recently submitted three propositions for our investigation: First, Whether a Petition to Parliament, or an Address to the King, or a Convention.*

Permit us briefly to state our views for your revival; and with respect to the first, we behold *we are a conquered people; we have tamely submitted to the galling yoke, and resistance in the present circumstance is vain; we cannot, we cannot act the man, and as necessity have no law, we think ourselves under that degrading necessity to state our grievances to the House of Commons, with a request for redress, and should they refuse to grant our reasonable petition, we have still got (no thanks to them) a formidable engine, that will convey the insult to the remotest parts of the kingdom. As to the propriety of the second, we wish to submit to your superior judgment, and should esteem it a favour to be informed of the result, for at present we are dubious of its good consequences. Lastly, a Convention, and oh! that the period were arrived; but in the present state of affairs, alas! it is impracticable; yet this is the object we pursue, and esteem any other means only in subordination to, and as having a tendency to accomplish that desirable end.*

We

We wish to be in unison with our brethren and fellow-labourers, and should be glad of any information as soon as it is convenient, and we beg your advice whether it is necessary, as soon as possible, to collect signatures to a petition for a real representation of the people, and by whom to present it; whether Mr. Coke, Mr. Burch, or any of the friends of the people; and whether it is attended with any expence.—*Our Members are both inimical to the business.*

We can give you no accurate statement of the representation in our neighbourhood, only observe it is equally farcial here as elsewhere. To conclude with ——— for all favours received, wishing you ——— and success, and may heaven avert
We subscribe ourselves, Gentlemen, your

Obliged humble servant,

(Signed) ———

Note. Please to direct to ——— St. Mary's church, Mr. ——— being no longer our secretary.—We have between 30 and 40 separate societies in Norwich, besides many in the country villages.—

Copy of a Letter from the Secretary of the Society for Constitutional Information at Birmingham to the Secretary of the Society for Constitutional Information at London.

Sir,

Birmingham, March 25th, 1793.

At the request of the Society for Constitutional Information I hereby acknowledge the receipt of your letter, whereby it appears that your society have acceded to our request, by electing the persons (whose names you were furnished with) as associated members in your society, for which we beg you to accept our united thanks, and best wishes that your society may go on to accumulate a mass of true patriots, whose principles may not be subverted by interest, or conquered by fear.

This society offers with gratitude their thanks and commendations to ———, Esq. for the present accompanying your letter, but more particularly for his zeal in the cause of freedom, which cannot be promoted but by the free use of the press, which we trust will never be restrained from Britons. Another letter accompanies this, containing a few particulars, which we doubt not you will peruse with pleasure. Will write you further on that subject shortly.

I am, &c.

———— Sec.

Copy of a Letter from the Secretary to the Constitutional Society at Sheffield to the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society.

Sheffield, Committee Room of the Constitutional Society,

Sir,

April 17th, 1793.

I am desired by the Committee to enclose you a printed copy of the petition agreed on by the inhabitants here, to be presented to the House of Commons, for a reform in parliament, and the address accompanying the same. Upwards of five thousand signatures

tures are already affixed to it, and we have no doubt there will be at least as many more.

I am, with great respect, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,

Secretary to the Constitutional Society.

To the Secretary of the Corresponding Society, London.

P. S. Having no direction to the Constitutional Whigs, Independents, and Friends of the People, and being desired by them "to convey future favours through the same channel as the last," which was by your means, beg you will send the other letter which comes directed to you by the same post, to Mr. — Secretary of the said society.

Copy of a Letter from the Secretary of the Society for Constitutional Information to the Secretary of the United Political Societies at Norwich.

Sir,

16th April, 1793.

We have to acknowledge, with great satisfaction, the letter which you favoured us with, dated the 5th instant, relative to the most desirable of all other objects, the reform of a parliamentary representation. The honour you do us in supposing that we are better fitted than yourselves for the promotion of political knowledge we must disclaim, because we observe with the greatest pleasure that our country correspondents have too much zeal and information to want success in their public endeavours, whether at Norwich, at Sheffield, at Manchester, or elsewhere throughout the nation. In our sincerity for the good of our country we trust that we are all equal, and as such we doubt not of our ultimate success.

We see, with sorrow, the existence of those evils which you so justly represent as the streams of corruption overflowing this once free and prosperous country. We see, with surprize and abhorrence, that men are to be found both able and willing to support those corruptions. It is however no small consolation to find that others are not wanting, in every point of the nation, of an opposite character, who are ready to remedy, by all laudable and honourable means, the defect in our representation, the usurped extension of the duration of parliaments, and other grievances, such as you notice in your letter.

That the constitution of England has no more of that character it once possessed; that the supposed democracy of the country has become a matter of property and privilege; and that we have therefore no longer that mixt government which our adversaries are praising, when they know it is no longer in our possession, are facts notorious and indisputable. Where then are we to look for the remedy? To that parliament of which we complain, to the executive power, which is implicitly obeyed, if not anticipated, in that parliament; or to ourselves represented, in some meeting of Delegates for the extensive purpose of reform, which we suppose you understand by the term *Convention*.

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It is the end of each of these propositions that we ought to look to; and as success in a good cause must be the effect of perseverance, and the rising reason of the time, let us determine with coolness, but let us persevere with decision. As to a Convention, we regard it as a plan the most desirable and most practicable, so soon as the great body of the people shall be courageous and virtuous enough to join us in the attempt.

Hitherto we have no reason to believe that the moment is arrived for that purpose.—As to any petition to the Crown, we believe it hopeless in its consequences.—With respect to the last of your proposals, we are at a loss to advise. If the event is looked to in the vote which may be obtained from that body to whom this petition is to be addressed, which of us can look to it without the prospect of an absolute negative? In this point of view therefore it cannot require a moment's consideration. But if we regard the *policy* of such a petition, it may, in our apprehension, be well worth considering as a warning voice to our present legislators, and as a signal for imitation to the majority of the people. Should such a plan be vigorously and generally pursued, it would hold out a certainty to our fellow countrymen that we are not a handful of individuals unworthy of attention or consideration, who desire the restoration of the ancient liberties of England; but, on the contrary, it might bring into light that host of well-meaning men, who, in the different towns and counties of this realm, are silently but seriously anxious for reformation in the government.

We exhort you, with anxiety, to pursue your laudable endeavours for the common good, and never to despair of the public cause.

We are, &c.

Signed by order, in the name of the
Society for Constitutional Information.

— — — Secretary.

Copy of a printed Letter from the Constitutional Society at Sheffield to the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society.

Committee Room of the Constitutional Society, Sheffield,
April 24, 1793.

Sir,

I am desired by the committee of this society to transmit you the annexed Resolutions, and to ask the opinion of your society whether it may not be expedient for all the societies in Great Britain to adopt similar resolutions, and to fix on a stated time to follow them up with petitions or remonstrances, or both, against the present impolitic and ruinous war.—We think a measure of this kind, coming from so many quarters of the kingdom at the same time, would not fail of having great weight; and the present lamentable state of the country demands that something effectual should be adopted towards its relief.

Requesting as speedy an answer as possible, I remain, with the greatest respect, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

— — — Secretary.

PEACE.

P E A C E.

At a general meeting of the Constitutional Society of Sheffield, held on Friday the 12th of April 1793.

— — — — — in the chair.

Resolved, That peace is the blessing, and war the curse and scourge of nations; and that the present war is destructive of the happiness, commerce, and liberties of this country; that our manufacturers and merchants already deplore its wretched effects; and that nothing short of an immediate peace can save this country from ruin.

Resolved, That as the motives alledged by the *executive* MAGISTRATE for conducting war against the Republic of France no longer exist, we deem it improper that a defensive war should be converted into an offensive war, and must eventually exhaust the revenues, and spill the blood of our countrymen.

Resolved, That no provocatives or manifestoes of the French warrant us, during this unexampled crisis of public and domestic dangers, in the prosecution of an offensive war, which is now becoming we dread the war of kings, and not of their subjects.

Resolved, that notwithstanding any previous insults we may have offered to the Republic of France, it does not behove the character of a generous government to pursue with vengeance those they hate and have injured.

Resolved, That as our ally is by public authority declared to be no longer in danger, as her towns are repaired and garrisoned; and as the re-conquest of the Belgic provinces form a potent barrier to any present projects of invasion on the part of the French, it is our opinion that the British troops ought to be recalled.

Resolved, That as an alliance with the kingdom of France was considered by William Pitt as of the greatest importance to the commerce and happiness of this country, it is the opinion of this society that it ought to be renewed with the Republic of France, more especially to prevent the ambitious views of those confederate despots who, at Pilnitz and Pavia, agree to share the remnant of Poland, the spoil of France, and of European Turkey.

— — — — —, Chairman,

— — — — —, Secretary.

Copy of a Letter from the Secretary of the Constitutional Society at Sheffield to the Secretary of the Corresponding Society in London.

Sheffield, Committee Room of the Constitutiona Society,

Sir,

May 3d, 1793.

I am desired by the committee to acknowledge the receipt of your last favour, and to thank you for the same. You will see by this, copies of the petitions which we sent you, that we have taken the step you so warmly recommend, and which indeed you might well suppose, after our circular letter on the subject, we ought not to omit doing. We did it as the act not of the society alone, but of the whole town and neighbourhood. There were nearly ten thousand signatures to it.

We have sent you herewith several copies of the Resolutions we have have entered into against the war, which we beg you will distribute

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distribute in such manner as you shall think best for the purpose intended, and let us know, as soon as possible, how you approve them.

The direction you sent before is as good a one as you can have, to Mr. —, at —, Sheffield. By order, and in the name of the committee, I am, Sir,

Your very humble servant,

Secretary to the Constitutional Society.

Draft of a Letter from the London Corresponding Society to the Secretary of the Friends of the People at Edinburgh.

Sir,

London, May 17th, 1793.

The London Corresponding Society eagerly seize the opportunity of Mr. — going back to Edinburgh, to request of your society a renewal of correspondence, and a more intimate co-operation in that which both societies alike seek, viz. a reform in the parliamentary representation. We are very sensible that no society can by itself bring about that desirable end; let us therefore unite as much as possible, *not only with each other, but with every other society throughout the nation.* Our petitions, you will have learned, have been all of them unsuccessful; our attention *must now therefore be turned to some more effectual means.* From your society we would willingly learn them, and you, on your part, may depend upon our adopting the firmest measures, provided they are constitutional; and we hope the country will not be behind hand with us.

This war has already opened the eyes of many, and should it continue much longer, there is no answering for its effects on the mind of the people.

Our society has met with much persecution, nevertheless we go on increasing in number and political knowledge. Wishing you and our cause all success, we remain most cordially, Sir,

For the London Corresponding Society,

Your Friends and Fellow Labourers,

———, Chairman.

———, Secretary,

To the Friends of the People at Edinburgh.

Copy of a Letter from the Secretary of the Friends of the People at Edinburgh to the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society.

Mr. — did me the pleasure to call on Thursday afternoon, and delivered your letter of the 17th current. I am much pleased with the contents of it, and shall lay it before the first meeting of our societies here, which however does not take place till Monday sevensnight. I would have acknowledged the receipt of your favour by yesterday's post, but was too much employed in removing our household to another lodging to attend to any thing else.

If either you in England or we in Scotland should attempt separately the reform which we, I trust seek to obtain, we should

by so doing only expose our weakness, and manifest our ignorance of the corruption which opposes our important undertaking. If we fought only the extirpation of one set of interested men from the management of national affairs, that place might be given to another set *without affecting the vitals adverse to the system of reform.* These might be easily accomplished; but to cut up deep and wide-rooted prejudices, to give effectual energy to the dictates of truth in favour of public virtue and national prosperity, in opposition to self and all its interested habits, and to withstand and overawe the final efforts of the powers of darkness, is the work of the whole and not of a part, a work to which mankind, till this *awful period,* were never adequate, *because never till now disposed to fraternize, not merely, or only, I trust, from the sense of the common danger to which we are exposed, but from the ennobling principle of universal benevolence.*

I know no greater service that I can do my country than to promote the union you so wisely desire; and I am happy to assure you that I have hitherto discovered no sentiment in our association adverse to the most intimate and brotherly union with the associations in England.

I think the minds of all must, in the *nature of things,* be *now turned to more effectual means of reform.* Not one person was convinced of the necessity of it by the most convincing arguments of reason, together with the most unequivocal expressions of universal desire. What then is to be hoped for from repetition; I am only afraid that the bow in England against reform was so contracted that *in returning* it may break. You would willingly learn, you say, from us. I own that we ought to be forward in this. We have, at once, in *great wisdom* perfected our plan of *organization*; and if we were in the same independent state of mind as *the people of England,* we would be able to take the lead. The associations with you are no more I fear—excuse my freedom—than an aristocracy for the good of the people. They are indeed moderate, firm, and virtuous, and better cannot be; but we are the people themselves, and we are the first to shew that the people can both judge and resolve, if undirected by faction, with both wisdom and moderation.

I have not a higher wish in the present exertions for reform, than to *see the people universally and regularly associated,* because I am persuaded that the present disastrous engagements will issue in ruin, and the people then *must provide for themselves*; and it would be unhappy, when *we should be ready to act with unanimity, to be occupied about organization, without which however anarchy must ensue.* We will not need but to be prepared for the event, to “stand and see the salvation of the Lord.” Let us therefore take the hint given us by our opposers; let us *begin in earnest to make up our minds relative to the extent of reform which we ought to seek; be prepared to justify it, and to controvert objections*; let us model the whole in the public mind; let us provide every stake and stay of the tabernacle which we would erect, so that when the tabernacles of oppression in the palaces of ambition are broken down; under

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under the madness and folly of their supporters, we may then, without anarchy and all dangerous delay, *erect at once our tabernacle of righteousness*. And may the Lord himself be in it.

How hurtful to the feelings of a reflecting mind to look back to the wretched state, in which the Roman monarchy, enfeebled and broken by its own corruption, left the nations which it had subjected, like "Sheep without a shepherd" they soon became a prey to every invader, because there was none to gather and unite them. Had they, foreseeing the evil, associated for mutual defence, no robber would have been able to enslave them; they would have given laws to all parties as well as to themselves; all separate colonies and nations would have sought their alliance; but not having virtue to associate and heal the divisions, and root out the selfish spirit, which ambition fostering governments procure to their subjects, they fell under oppressions, from under whose iron sceptre they have never yet been able to deliver themselves.

We may suppose an event which we deprecate; nay, should we not be prepared for every possible issue of the present unprecedented divisions of mankind, we have a right to be apprehensive of the abilities of our own managers, who are so afraid to depart from precedent, that, like men of detail, they may be inadequate to the task of preserving the vessel from shipwreck, now grappling with danger, not only great, but new and uncommon. If the present ministry fail, who after them shall be trusted; it requires little penetration to see the anarchy and discord which will follow; it will be such that nothing *short of a general union among the people themselves will be able to heal*; haste, therefore, to associate, at least to be ready to associate. If then, such a broken state of things should take place, the civil broils that would necessarily ensue would soon subside before the united irresistible voice of the whole. Do not, I intreat you, hesitate, thinking such a work *premature as yet*; but a month, and then it may be too late. A malignant party may be already formed, and only waiting for the halting of the present managers; it will then be too late to seek to subject to deliberation, after a party has dared the act of rebellion. *If you go no farther than separate meetings in different towns, we will not be able to confide in your confraternity, because, while in such a state, you may be but the tools of a faction.* We could have all confidence, and unite with all affection, in one *assembly of commissioners*, from all countries of the world, if we knew they were chosen by the unbiassed voice of the people, because they would come up with the same disinterested views and desires as ourselves, having all agreed to a common centre of union and interest; but we could not confide in fellow citizens who kept aloof from such union, and would not previously affiliate in one great and indivisible family.

In troubling you with so long an epistle I have at least shewn my inclination to correspond. I have also hinted at things which appear to me the present subjects of consideration, because I am desirous of your opinion on them. I have possibly wrote with too much freedom, but you will place it to account of zeal in the cause

cause, and on this score discharge my design, which is disinterested and philanthropic.

With sincere esteem and affection,

I am, Sir,

Your wellwisher,

W. SKIRVING, Sec.

Copy of a Letter from the Secretary of the Constitutional Society at Leeds to the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society.

Delegate Meeting of the Constitutional Society.

Sir,

Leeds, May 30th, 1793.

By request of the Sheffield Society, and having received directions from them for the purpose of corresponding with all the societies in England and Scotland,

We the members of the Leeds Constitutional Society, in order to obtain the desired end of Parliamentary Reform, desire fraternal communication with the Corresponding Society in London.

We shall be glad of any information or instruction in your power on all occasions, and hope you will find the Leeds society always faithful to the interests of the people; and though they are but few, not exceeding two hundred, they are men, and are determined to exert their utmost in order to instruct their neighbours in their common interest.

With this we send you a copy of our address and declaration, and shall ever acknowledge all favours from you.

Wishing the cause of freedom, in which we have embarked, every degree of success,

I remain, in the name and by
Order of the Society,

Copy of a Letter from the Secretary of the Constitutional Society at Leeds to the Secretary of the Society for Constitutional Information.

Delegate Meeting of the Constitutional Society.

Leeds, May 28th, 1793.

Sir,

By the request of the Sheffield Society, that the Leeds Constitutional Society would correspond with all the societies in Great Britain and Scotland, and receive directions for them for that purpose,

We, the members of the Leeds Constitutional Society, beg leave to address these few lines to you, hoping that your paternal affection for your fellow mortals, of whatever description, may induce you to admit to fraternization a few poor mechanics, friends of liberty, but enemies to anarchy. Aristocratic tyranny and democratic ignorance seem to pervade and overawe the town of Leeds to that amazing degree, that in the general we are beheld more like monsters than the friends of the people, and I believe that these six months past the ignorant part of the people
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(through the insinuations of the aristocracy and the priests) have expected us to fall on them and destroy them; but since the 11th of April last, the time we had the opportunity of publishing our address and declaration, and our steady and uniform conduct, the people begin to hold us with new eyes, and we begin to increase in our numbers, and we hope, ere long, the persons they took for their greatest enemies will be looked on as their best friends.

We have herewith sent you a copy of our address and declaration, and shall be glad if you think it worth your notice to correspond with a company of poor mechanics. We shall ever gratefully acknowledge all favours.

Our numbers amount to near two thousand, and we constantly keep increasing, and, in general, are very regular in their conduct; but though through predominancy of the aristocracy they have been overawed, that they scarce durst tell their neighbours they were their friends; but I hope the clouds are dispersing, and the glorious sun of liberty is approaching to its meridian.

I remain, in the name, and by
Order of the Society,
Sir, yours, &c.

Secretary of the Constitutional Society, Leeds.

Draft of a Letter from the London Corresponding Society, to the Secretary of the Constitutional Society at Birmingham.

Sir,

10th June 1793.

It is with singular satisfaction the Committee of the London Corresponding Society received your letter; they are very glad to see the spirit of freedom springing up in Birmingham, and they make no doubt but that the zeal of your society, and the encrease of your numbers, will soon do away the stigma thrown on your town by the unjustifiable behaviour of a church and king mob. We are entirely of your opinion with regard to the necessity of a general union; and we believe as you do, that *when once the country shall have so united, the Neros of the day will be forced to yield to the just demand of a long and sore oppressed people.*

With pleasure we accept your proffered correspondence, and earnestly beg of you to let us hear from your society by every opportunity. We wish likewise you would point out to us *some safe mode of conveyance* for such informations and publications as we may think necessary to be transmitted to you. The post we no ways rely on, as many of our letters have already been intercepted.

If any of the members of your society should have occasion to visit this metropolis, we hope you will not let him come without a letter from you, and that while they stay here they will frequently *assist at the meetings* of our several divisions, and by thus associating commence an union which we hope soon to see spread itself all over Britain.

We will not enter into a detail of our grievances; we are equally well informed thereon, and all alike thoroughly convinced that nothing short of annual parliaments and universal suffrage

frage can restore to us that degree of civil liberty we are justly entitled to, &c. &c.

To —, Secretary to the Birmingham
Society for Constitutional Information.

*Copy of a Letter from the Political Societies at Norwich to the
Secretary of the London Corresponding Society.*

Received 25 June, 1793.—Answered 25 July 1793.

The Political Societies of Norwich.

Sir,

I lately received your letter from Mr. —, dated April 22d, which, through multiplicity of business, we have omitted to answer—hope you will excuse the delay. *We also received your friendly letter, prior to that, wherein you state three propositions; first, a petition to his Majesty, or to Parliament, or a National Convention, and ordered one of our committee to answer it;—should be glad if you will inform me whether it was attended to;—I gave my opinion on the subject to the Constitutional Society of London, and found their ideas congenial to my own, viz. an Address to the King—futile; a Petition to Parliament (as a conquered people)—tolerable; a National Convention (if circumstances admitted)—best of all.* To what alarming crisis are we arrived—the Junto is formed and established,—the people become a prey, and (to adopt the phrase of an Hibernian apostate) are treated as the Swinish Multitude, except the privilege of fattening. Wars must commence at the caprice of individuals; people torn from their houses to be butchered; windmills must be attacked at the risk of being carried over and dashed to atoms; the nation drained of its sustenance to support a league, &c. &c. &c. Many epithets may with great propriety be applied, excepting such as Fox, Sheridan, Grey, Erskine, Landdowne, Lauderdale, Stanhope, Paine, Priestly, Tooke, Wharton, Macleod, Barlow, Mackintosh, Cooper, besides many who have suffered under the iron hand of &c. and when the people have complained, and humbly requested a removal of abuses, they have been treated with insult. Alas! where is the majesty of the people? An indifferent observer would suppose it to centre in stars and garters, ribbons and costly apparel, palaces, coaches and horses, with all the trumpery of puerile amusement;—and were it not for their accursed consequences, we could bear with it;—but when we consider how many sweat and toil and starve to support it, how can we be persuaded but that there is a contrivance between the land owners and the merchant to hold the people in vassalage; for they eat up the people as they eat up bread;—the influence of the aristocracy and hierarchy is become very alarming, for they have absorbed and swallowed up the people; but a rumour is spread from the south, and it is terrible to tyrants,—it stings their mind,—it galls their flesh, and like Pashur, are a terror to themselves lest the people should assert their rights,

Yours, &c.

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Copy of a Letter from the Herefordshire Society to the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society.

Sir,

Hereford, July 5th, 1793.

Owing to some mistake in the post, your letter did not arrive till after the meeting of the Hertfordshire Society in April last had taken place, I therefore had not an opportunity of laying it before the society till their general meeting of Monday last. I am directed by the society to acknowledge the receipt of your favour, and to assure you, that they shall be happy to co-operate with the London Corresponding Society for the attainment of the common object of parliamentary reform, so far as the views of the two societies are compatible; with regard to the rights of universal suffrage and annual parliaments, we do not pledge ourselves to demand them. Without however entering into reasoning on the subject, which would admit of much more discussion than the limits of a letter would allow, they are convinced that the common object of the two societies is the same, and that the mode in which they both wish to obtain that object is the same also, by constitutional means; they will therefore be happy in receiving any communication from the London Corresponding Society. Perseverance and union are the means by which parliamentary reform must be obtained. They shall not, they trust, be found deficient in the one, and are at all times disposed to cultivate the other.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient humble servant,

Secretary.

All Letters to the society are to be addressed to _____,
Hereford.

Copy of a Letter from Tewksbury to the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society.

Fellow Citizen,

July 6th, 1793.

Am commissioned by the society, as being secretary, to thank you for your favour of the letter and pamphlets—they are happy to find the existence of such associations as yours for the attainment of so laudable a purpose as that of a parliamentary reform, and hope to see them more general throughout the kingdom—they think it high time for the people of this country to look into things, and keep a stricter watch over their rights and liberties than they have hitherto, lest they should be undermined, especially when abuses so glaring are perpetually staring them in the face, which the most prejudiced and interested will not but allow.

As you wished to be informed respecting our society, shall give you a concise view of it. We call it the Society for Political and Moral Information—we have a set of articles for the conducting of it—Monthly and quarterly meetings for the proposing of books, and settling the secretary's accounts—we take in a periodical work called The Patriot, and a town and country news-paper.

We have no correspondence with any society; but would gladly, were it not for the prejudice that prevails, which to be
sure

sure has in some measure subsided, and the smallness of our number; but however we shall be glad to receive a line from you when any thing occurs.—The burning of Thomas Paine's effigy, together with the *blessed effects* of the present war, has done more good to the cause than the most substantial arguments; 'tis amazing the increase of friends to liberty, and the spirit of enquiry that is gone abroad; scarcely an old woman but is talking politics. We have made the best use of your pamphlets. The society desire their respects and good wishes for your health, including my own, and remain,

Your fellow citizen, and
Co-operator in the glorious
Cause of Liberty,

Copy of a Letter from the Secretary of the Constitutional Society at Leeds to the Secretary of the Society for Constitutional Information.

Sir,

I am desired by the Committee of this society to transmit you the annexed resolutions, and I hope you will receive the same as a token of their respect, copies of which are sent to the several societies mentioned in the resolutions.

We have received a letter with a petition from Glasgow to his Majesty, praying that he would take the present alarming state of the nation into his most serious consideration, and use the utmost of his endeavours to restore us to the blessings of peace, which I believe will be followed from Leeds with a similar petition, and if followed up from all other places, perhaps, might have most salutary effect.

I am, with the greatest respect,
In the name and by order of the society,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

Leeds,
July 21st, 1793.

Leeds Constitutional Society.

At a meeting of Delegates of the said Society, on the 26th day of June instant.

It was resolved, That the thanks of this society be given to Charles Grey, Esquire, and the rest of the illustrious minority who supported his motion on the 6th and 7th of May last, for a parliamentary reform.

That the decision of the representative body on the above motion should only act with the people as a cementer of the bonds of fellowship and unanimity; and that this society think it their duty, and are determined, in conjunction with all the societies in Great Britain, to persevere until they have obtained the object of their association. — That the thanks of this society be given to the Society of the Friends of the People, for their laborious endeavours to procure information on the subject

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subject of Parliamentary Reform, and for the publication of the same, as well as the liberal present lately received from them, and to the different societies which have expressed their desires for affiliation with this society, particularly those of London, Sheffield, Birmingham, and Glasgow.

That the Secretary do notify the above resolutions to Mr. Grey, and the several societies respectively; and that these resolutions be published in one of the Leeds and one of the London papers.

President.

Secretary.

Draft of a Letter from the London Corresponding Society, to the Secretary to the Political Societies at Nor-wich.

Fellow Citizen,

London, 25th July, 1793.

The London Corresponding Society have received and read with pleasure your letter of the 25th of June, but the answer which you mention to have been made to our three questions has not yet come to hand. We shall be glad to be informed in your next whether it was ever put in the post-office.

With regard to the questions themselves, however individuals may have made up their minds on them, *the public seemed most to approve the mode of petitioning parliament.* We accordingly acquiesced, and sent in a petition, signed by near 6,000 persons. With this letter you will receive a copy of it; and with its fate you are doubtless not unacquainted.

While we agree with you that the people are treated like Swine, we are forced to acknowledge that some among them, from their *stupid and ignorance*, scarcely deserve better usage; however, unceasingly labour to meliorate their condition as well as our own, and convinced that a thorough parliamentary reform is the only means of effectuating it, we firmly pursue our purpose, and in the most conspicuous manner under the eye of the court, in the middle of the metropolis, and in the very nest of place and pension hornets, the tavern where Reeves, the tool of the junto, holds his inquisitorial tribunal, have lately held a general meeting of the society, sent forth an address to the nation, and entered into some spirited resolutions, a few copies of which we desire you to accept and promulgate as far and as wide as you can; at the same time rest assured that the firmness displayed therein is not confined to words, but that on every occasion our society will be found foremost in *asserting and recovering the Liberties of their country*.

Exhorting you, therefore, to throw aside all unavailing complaint, we wish you to occupy yourselves in instructing the people, in introducing and maintaining order and regularity in your own society, and in forming a junction with all others associated for the same purpose throughout the nation, by keeping up a constant correspondence with them; but, above all, orderly and courageously preparing yourself for the event; for as it is natural to suppose that those

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who

who now prey on the public will not willingly yield up their enjoyments, nor re-possess us of our rights *without a struggle*, which, by their behaviour in Ireland, we have some reason to think they are meditating, and perhaps may intend to effect by means of those very foreign mercenaries who are now paid by the sweat of our brow, and whom, under some plausible pretence, it would be no difficult matter to land on our shore—It may be more advantageous to humanity to shew them at first, that their opponents are neither mob nor rabble, *but an indignant oppressed people, in whom is not yet entirely extinct the valour of their forefathers.*

Union and increase being then our only resources, let us diligently exert ourselves therein with zeal and patience, removing ignorance and prejudice, with firmness and a consistent behaviour encouraging those who join us; and, above all, avoiding little bickerings among ourselves, ever discountenancing selfish jealousies and private animosities, and cordially joining with heart and hand in the common cause.

Your neighbourhood must severely feel the dreadful consequences of an iniquitous, depopulating, and ruinous war, but you are not the only sufferers; from various parts of the country we learn, that the war abroad has already spread desolation at home; yet such is the blindness of some folks, that they talk of its being continued for years. Peace we wish to all men, but to such friends destruction. Let us hear from you soon, and let our future correspondence be more regular. We are, with sincerity, Fellow Citizen, for the London Corresponding Society, as

Your friends and fellow labourers for the
good of our country,

Draft of a Letter from the London Corresponding Society, to the Secretary of the Constitutional Society at Leeds.

Fellow Citizen,

30th July, 1793.

The London Corresponding Society have at once to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 30th May, and to apologize for not having answered it sooner; but by accident it was for some time mislaid, and the multiplicity of business upon our hands occasioned a still further delay.

Highly approving of the directions given you by the Sheffield Society for Constitutional Information, to correspond with every society in Great Britain, we joyfully accept your overture, and shall not in future fail to improve the acquaintance; at the same time, being inhabitants of the metropolis, and forming a society which has undergone some degree of political warfare, and thereby acquired experience, we will, as occasion offers, most fraternally give you every advice and information in our power; but as you already have the assistance of the Sheffield Society, there will remain little for us to do that way.

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Let not the smallness of your number deter you from arduously pursuing your plan. Reason makes sure though slow progress, and having once gained a footing in the human mind, can never be eradicated.

Your Address and Declaration have likewise been mislaid, and as yet we have been unable to recover them, therefore beg you will, with your next, send us another copy.

To return to ourselves, we have made a stand against the Place and Pension Clubs; we have been abused in the Senate, calumniated in public, persecuted in private, and worried out of public houses, yet, (we continue meeting numerously entire) our demands are such that no one has dared to deny their consonance with the principles of the constitution, and our doctrine makes numerous proselytes, and greatly increases the number of those who may with truth be styled the friends of their country in particular, and of mankind in general. We petitioned Parliament, and they were forced to admit our petition, although they would not grant what it required; in short, we strengthen so much, that on *the 8th of this month* we had a general meeting of the society at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, the very place where Reeves and his accomplices meet. He met there at the same time in a room under us, and, together with his associates, swallowed a copious draught of mortification in seeing our meeting so well conducted and so numerously attended; we say numerously, for having limited the number of admission tickets to 700, many who had been dilatory in providing themselves were unavoidably excluded.

Inclosed you have copies of our petition to Parliament, of our two first Addresses, of our correspondence with Mr. Francis, of Mr. Wharton's motion in the House of Commons on the 31st May, and of the Address to the Nation, and the Resolutions we published at our ——— general meeting. You will therein discover all that we wish to obtain, and *what we will fully obtain ere we cease to be a society, notwithstanding the attempt now making in Ireland, and meant to be introduced into Great Britain.* We invite you most cordially to co-operate with us, and even, if our rules and pursuit meet your entire approbation, and you have no particular Attachment to the name you have adopted, it might advantage the cause were you to incorporate yourselves with us, and go under the common denomination. This however is only an idea thrown out for your consideration. You are at perfect liberty to notice it or not. We are with sincerity, your fellow labourers,

&c. &c.

Draft of a Letter from the London Corresponding Society to Hertford.

Sir,

London, 31st July, 1793.

Your letter of the 5th instant we have laid before the London Corresponding Society, who, sincerely anxious to promote the cause of freedom and humanity, by uniting and corresponding with the friends to reform, directed us to answer you with all convenient

venient speed; but business multiplying fast on our hands, both from the rapid increase of our own society, and from the vast number of country societies weekly starting up, and who require at our hands a regular correspondence, we have been prevented from being so exact as we could wish; the latter impediment however is far from inauspicious, as it may fairly be attributed to the diffusiveness of political knowledge causing men more seriously to reflect on the ruinous measures now pursued, which become more unpopular, proportionally as they become more unwise.

We receive with pleasure your assurance of co-operating with us for a reform in parliament, an object to which all our endeavours tend, and on which our hearts are invariably fixed; but as your declaration, that "you will not pledge yourselves to demand "Universal Suffrage and Annual Parliaments," is followed by no specific plan of reform of your own, we are under some difficulty how to conclude—Perhaps, as strangers, you write to us with that prudent reserve which is sometimes necessary; and that idea receives strength from your appearing afterwards convinced that the common object of the two societies is the same, which we readily admit; but as mutual confidence is the basis of union, and the only rational pledge and support for co-operative exertion, we trust your next will do away every difficulty.

With respect to universal suffrage and annual Parliaments, a mature conviction of their justice and necessity for the preservation of liberty and prosperity to the great body of the people, and for securing the independence of parliament, was our primary inducement to associate. We therefore candidly assure you, that these our principles, as already announced to the public, remain immutable. Unconnected with any party whatever, we can consider no reform radical but such as will enable every individual of the community to enjoy the advantages thereof equally with ourselves; for if ignorance of the nature of government, or the merits of the candidates, be an argument against universal suffrage, as our opponents pretend, the same reasons would equally incapacitate a great majority of those who now enjoy that privilege, to the exclusion of very many thousands much better informed than themselves—not to mention, that under a more equalized mode of government, the people would be at once induced and empowered to improve themselves in useful knowledge.—In a word, we know, no principle, consistent with justice or reason, by which we could exclude conscientiously any part of the community from an equality of rights and privileges, which every member of society, as he contributes to its support, ought equally to enjoy.

With respect to annual parliaments, we will just remark, that good members may be re-elected, whilst twelve months we think fully sufficient for the welfare of millions to remain at the mercy of a bad representative.—Having thus unequivocally stated our principles, we shall conclude by observing, that the bill just past in Ireland is of a nature to awaken the jealousy of every friend to freedom and humanity

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humanity, will render every exertion justifiable, should a similar attack upon constitutional freedom be attempted here. We shall be happy to unite in the closest bonds of union with the Hertford Society, and hope, as they have no party views, that in a very short space of time they will think entirely as we do on the subject of a parliamentary reform.

We are, &c. &c.

On the 8th July, we had a general meeting of the society at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, in the Strand. Reeves and his associates were at the same time in the room beneath us. We send you a few copies of the Address that was then published.

Draft of a Letter from the London Corresponding Society, to the Tewkesbury Society.

Fellow Citizens,

London, 3d August, 1793.

Your Letter of the 6th July has been laid before the committee of delegates of the London Corresponding Society, and it is with great pleasure they see an Infant Society starting up in your part of the Country, Go on and prosper; no assistance shall be wanting on our part as to information, instruction, or any other thing in which we can be useful to you—we herewith send you copies of most of our publications since we have been a Society—may they be of service!

We recommend to you to peruse attentively our first Address, and the rules which are annexed to it; it will likewise be adviseable for you to abide entirely by a thorough parliamentary reform, as is therein expressed, and to pay great attention to the instruction of your neighbours in their political rights, for which purpose weekly meetings, if they could conveniently take place, would prove more advantageous than your meeting only once a month; and if you thought it might facilitate your progress, the London Corresponding Society empower us to inform you, that they will willingly incorporate your Society with ours, under the title of the Corresponding Society in Tewkesbury; and if so, our rules will become yours, our intelligence will be the same, and our correspondence weekly and regularly carried on—but then our mode of proceeding must be entirely alike, and no reserve must take place between us.—We imagine some other Societies in other parts of the country will fall into the same plan, and it need not be pointed out to you how much more forcible such a junction would render every thing that comes from us; but before you do it you must acquaint us with your design, in order that we may give you every Instruction necessary, Farewell Fellow Citizens, and firmly rely on the assistance and sincere friendship of the London Corresponding Society in so good a cause.

Your's sincerely.

Draft of a Letter from the London Corresponding Society, apparently intended to be sent to different Societies.

Sir,

London, 15th August, 1793.

The London Corresponding Society, after so long an interruption in their correspondence with you, anxiously wish to renew and to render it more interesting, firmly persuaded that the connection between the different Societies in Great Britain cannot be too closely cemented—to that end they beg you will point out a safer mode of conveyance for our Letters than the Post, and wish you, in answer to this, to give us the fullest account of your progress, and, of the state of Affairs in your department. Continuing in a slow but steady pace the career which we have begun, we are nearly certain that although the number of our members do not increase so rapidly as from the population of the Metropolis we might have expected, yet our principles make their way among the public and many thousands, who from connection, interest, &c. may be afraid or cautious of joining us overtly, notwithstanding are our staunch friends in private.—You very likely do not labour under the same difficulties that we do, who are situated in the very centre of corruption; and we have no doubt but the increase of your Society keeps pace with the increase of those national calamities which ever must result from an unjust war.

Viewing with indignation the oppression so generally exercised all over the nation, against every individual suspected of favouring the cause of the People, and lamenting the gross ignorance under which the People in general labour, with regard to their rights and duties when called upon to serve on Juries, we have determined to re-publish, with the addition of a few Notes and an appendix, a most excellent pamphlet, which made its first appearance about one hundred Years ago, and was written by that eminent Lawyer and honest man, Sir John Hawles, Solicitor General to King William; we therefore wish to know whether your Society would be inclined to circulate a number of them in your neighbourhood, and, if so, you will not delay to give us your orders for as many as you would have sent you; and as we seek merely to defray the expences of the printing, the Committee have fixed the price so low as Twenty-five Shillings per hundred.

Entreating you to give us an early answer, we remain, for the London Corresponding Society.

List of Societies annexed, viz.

Derby,
Stockport,
Manchester Ref.
Manchester Const.
Sheffield Const.
Nottingham.

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Citizen—, Coventry, 20th August, 1793

Please to inform your Society that I believe I may be able to establish a society in this despotic Town—We have drawn up our address, declaration, resolutions, and are ordered to be printed which I hope will be done this week.

I will bring these printed with me to London, as I hope to visit your Society as soon as I can leave this Society in safety.—They want strengthening, and will have a public meeting next Tuesday and we expect much opposition from the Corporation; and as I am chofe prefident, I will wait to receive the hire of this ministerial Badge of corruption.

I remain, with the greatest regard and esteem your
Society's friend and brother, labouring in the
field of reform, unfolicited by any party whatever.

P. S. You will, no doubt exhort them to fear no power of corruption, let these Powers be ever so great; but to pursue the reform with a manly and steady perseverance, unitedly with every similar institution in Great Britain, and let us not suffer our Society to perish, but rather let us all die together for the good of our brother man; fear no persecution whatever on the side of corruption, or that Ministerial vengeance can bring against those who are using their utmost exertions in the common cause of freedom, or are promoting love and good will to the Human race.

Draft of a Letter from the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society to Mr. Skirving.

Dear Sir, London, 5th October, 1793.
With pleasure I peruse your favour of the 21st Instant; but as yet have seen nor heard nothing of the two copies of Mr. Muir's

With pleasure I peruse your favour of the 21st Instant; but as yet have seen nor heard nothing of the two copies of Mr. Muir's trial, which you mention as being sent to the Society, and to myself. Be kind enough, notwithstanding to return that gentleman thanks for his polite attention; and assure him, that we view him in the light of a Martyr to freedom, as well as Mr. Palmer; and that

that our warmest Hopes are, that the oppressors of mankind will either be ashamed or afraid of carrying their revengeful malice into execution.

The general convention which you mention appears to Mr. Margarot (to whom alone I have communicated your letter) and myself, to be a very excellent measure, and as such I could wish you, without delay, to communicate it officially to our Society, *without any ways mentioning that you had written to me privately.* If in your official letter you should require us to send a deputation to that meeting, I have no doubt but our Society would with pleasure accept the Invitation, and I am persuaded it may do much good. Our freedom, as you justly observe, depends entirely upon *ourselves, and upon our availing ourselves of this opportunity, which once lost may not be so soon recovered.*—I am glad to discover by your testimony that I was by no ways mistaken in the high opinion I always had of Lord Daer's Patriotism. A title may be a bar to disinterested patriotism; but, it seems, he has evinced it to be an insuperable one.

You are right—it is true that we have had another general meeting, at which a hastily composed and suddenly produced address to the King was read, applauded, and agreed to be presented but on a cool revivál, the said address being found to be more ill-natured than spirited, more dangerous in its Language than advantageous in its object, besides being too long, the committee, with the approbation of the majority of the Society, have adopted another, much safer, more apposite, and relating solely to the war. Enclosed you have a copy of it. But you was misinformed when you was told we passed any resolutions at that meeting, for we only came to one, and that rather of a private Nature, namely, “That the conduct of Sir James Sanderson, in preventing the “meeting of the London Corresponding Society at the Globe Tavern, Fleet Street, was of such a nature as to place him below “our censure.”

I am, most sincerely,

Your Fellow Labourer and Well wisher.

P. S. Mr. Margarot desires to be remembered to you in the most affectionate manner. Do not in future, *on the Address of your Letter, mention any Thing of the (London Corresponding Society)* for it was a thousand to one that I received that Letter by post. To Mr. Skirving Edinburgh.

Copy of a Letter from Coventry to a person in London.

Coventry, October 23d, 1793.

Citizen _____,

The reason why I did not answer your letter of last week was this; I thought you would like to be informed how our Society was going on, therefore I yesterday called a meeting at Hewit's, which was last night well attended, and several new members admitted

mitted; and have many variations of other than ever. a parcel of likewise the responding their thanks inclosed in 50 more copies that he may Correspondence Mr. _____ which we shew him to sanctify dependence.

I shall like the coach, to Shall be with a few address to the begin with

Copy of a Letter from Sheffield to a person in Sheffield

Sir,

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mitted; and I am informed by some of the members, that we shall have many more candidates for admission next night. My expectations of our success in our new enterprise becomes more sanguine than ever. I have received from Mr. ———, two letters, and a parcel of their publications, which I distributed last night, likewise those which we received by you from the London Corresponding Society, for which our Society desired I would return their thanks to Citizens ——— and ———. I intend to send inclosed in a box to-morrow evening, by Balloon Coach, about 50 more copies of our addresses to Citizen ———, in order that he may dispose of them among the different divisions of the Corresponding Society; I shall likewise inclose a few addressed to Mr. ———, Secretary to the Constitutional Society, London, which we shall be obliged to you to present to him, and request him to sanction our efforts in the public cause with their correspondence.

I shall likewise send you your umbrella, carriage paid, by the coach, to-morrow evening.

Shall be obliged to Citizen ——— if he could favour us with a few more of their publications, particularly their "Address to the Nation," and likewise a few of the songs which begin with "God save the Rights of Man, &c."

I am, with respects to Mrs. ———, &c.

Your sincere Friend and Fellow Citizen,

—————

Copy of a Letter from the Secretary to the Constitutional Society at Sheffield to the Secretary of the Society for Constitutional Information.

Sheffield Committee Room of the Constitutional Society,
November 1st, 1793.

Sir,

Your letter, and the resolution of the Society for Constitutional Information in London, are this moment delivered to me by Mr. Ashton, in answer to which I sit down instantly to inform you that the Society has already transmitted its sentiments to the Secretary of the Convention at Edinburgh, Mr. Skirving, and declined sending a delegation for reasons which I will transcribe in the words of our letter.—"That it would have given this Society the most heartfelt satisfaction to have had a delegation present at their approaching Convention, had we received timely notice of their wishes that it should be so—but it unfortunately happens, that all the gentlemen belonging to the Society, which it would chuse for so important a business, are so previously engaged in affairs which they cannot possibly postpone in so short an interval, that it is not in our power to comply with their requisition on the present occasion.

"This Society are also of opinion, that to give such a measure its full effect, it would be necessary that the other Societies

"cieties in South Britain should have communication with each other on the subject, and be able to ascertain that deputations would be sent from at least a majority of the Societies in this part of the kingdom. And to evince that we should be happy to unite our efforts with theirs in one firm and settled plan, we assure them, that if they think proper to fix another meeting in January or February, or any other time which may be more agreeable, and give us immediate notice thereof, and that they wish to see delegates from the several Societies in this part of the kingdom, we will write to all those we are in correspondence with, to get such a delegation as may be truly respectable and important."

The above extract will evince to you, Sir, and the Society for Constitutional Information, how far your proceeding meets with our approbation. There is a worthy member of this Society and of the Committee, and I believe also of the committee of twelve, admitted into your Society, Citizen Alcock, now in London, and I doubt not but he has, before this will reach you, given you the whole information herein contained; but so scrupulously exact am I in answering every letter on public business, that I will not trust to him, though I know he is particularly desirous of being introduced to you.

I was chosen Secretary, *pro tempore*, to answer the letter from Mr. Skirving, and therefore continue the office thus much farther, not to keep you in suspense, as the Committee will not meet again before Wednesday next, and two or three of the members, who have seen your letter before I did, sent to request I would do so.

I cannot close this letter without remarking, that all the Societies we are in correspondence with have been remarkably remiss in their communications for several months past; to many we have addressed more than one or two without receiving any answers. This Society has been very active, and particularly in publishing, by which several *individuals* have suffered considerably, as the burthen has fallen chiefly on them. We have many thousand members, but a vast majority of them being working men, the war, which has deprived many of them of *all* employment, and almost every one of *half* his earnings, we have been crippled more than any other in the kingdom. We have the satisfaction to know that *we have* done great good, but I fear we must content ourselves with *good intentions* and wishes in future, as our funds are not only exhausted, but the Society is considerably in debt, and that debt must fall on a few who have stood forward on every occasion with their zeal, their active efforts, and their credit.

It appears to me, that if the Societies do not become more active, and more united in their efforts in the time to come, what they have done hitherto will be rendered useless, and arbitrary power will trample on all that is dear and valuable to freemen. The measures lately adopted in the sister kingdom, measures

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measures as opposite to, and incompatible with a free constitution as fire and water, and since followed up by the most slavish and horrid doctrines in the courts in Scotland, have hitherto been viewed only with a degree of apathy by the great bodies of the kingdom, which we little folks in the country look up to for examples, styling themselves patriotic, such as "The Society for Constitutional Information, in London," "The Friends of the People, ditto," "The Friends to the Liberty of the Press," that we begin almost to think here, it is time to nip those buds of freedom which were beginning to blossom with so much luxuriance, lest they should be exposed to the danger of being blighted by those torpid frosts which appear to have chilled every animating influence in those great barriers which we looked to for defence and protection.

I assure you, my good Sir, nothing is further from my intention than to give the smallest offence—I am a staunch Democrat, and speak my mind freely; and I hope you will consider what I have hinted at the supineness which appears at present to possess too great a sway, as merely the effect of that warmth and zeal for the great cause we are both strenuous to support and forward, the cause of Freedom and Parliamentary Reform.

I am, with the greatest respect, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

Secretary, *pro Tempore*, to the
Constitutional Society, Sheffield.

Copy of a Letter from the Secretary to the Constitutional Society at Leeds to the Secretary to the Society for Constitutional Information at London.

Sir,

Your's of the 29th I received, and laid it before the Committee of the Leeds Society on Monday the 4th of this instant.

It is with great satisfaction we read your letter, and approve of your having elected your delegates to serve upon such a laudable an undertaking; but if you meant for the Leeds Society to adopt the same measures, shall be glad if you will answer this immediately; as we are not acquainted with the time of their sitting we fear our delegates would be too late.

I am, Sir, with great respect,

Your humble servant,

Quarry Hill,
5th Nov. 1793.

Secretary of the Constitutional Society,

Copy of a Letter from the Secretary of the Society for Constitutional Information at Birmingham to the Secretary of the Society for Constitutional Information at London.

Sir,

Your favour of the 20th ult. came safe to hand, and was read in a committee of the Society on Sunday evening; and on

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first reading it, it obtained the approbation of every member present.—This Society will, at all times, concur with you in any measure that may have a tendency to hasten the return of departed Liberty.—Our sentiments on that subject are mutual with yours, and unchangeable.

The object of the mission of your delegates being of the utmost importance to the people of this country, and so intimately connected with their dearest interests, that one would imagine they would not hesitate a moment in support of the measure, from a consciousness that upon the success of the exertions of the friends to reform depends the Regeneration of Britain from a state of slavery to a state of freedom and happiness; and the exaltation of Burke's *Swinish Multitude* to the dignified character of freemen. We have only to regret that at present our ability will not allow us to co-operate with you, by sending a Delegate ourselves, in consequence of Mr. Pitt's War of Humanity having almost utterly annihilated our trade in this town, and driven a great number of our best members and mechanics across the Atlantic; and those that remain are but little better situated than the wretched inhabitants of Flanders. However, upon the whole, I believe it will be productive of good, as it has tended greatly to abate the pride, assuage the malice, and confound many of the devices of the enemies to Reform, particularly among the Dons of *Church and King*. And, finally, it has made many profelytes to the cause of liberty.

Please to accept our best wishes to you and your Society; and permit me to remain, in the name and behalf of the Birmingham Society for Constitutional Information,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

To _____ Secretary. Nov. 6th, 1793.
to the Society for Constitutional
Information, London.

P. S. Shall be glad to hear from you on all occasions.

Copy of a Letter from Coventry to the Secretary of the Society for Constitutional Information.

Sir,

In answer to your favour of the 29th of October, containing a copy of your resolution of the 28th, relative to the election of Delegates, I am desired by our Society to communicate to the Society for Constitutional Information, London, their approbation of a measure which we conceive peculiarly calculated to accelerate the acquisition of the object proposed.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

Coventry, _____ Secretary.
Nov. 19th, 1793.

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Copy of a Letter from the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society to Norwich.

London Corresponding Society, Nov. 23d, 1793.

Fellow Citizens,

You have been already informed, by the correspondence subsisting between the respective divisions of the Patriotic Societies in England and Scotland, of the Convention called and now sitting in Edinburgh, for the purpose of obtaining a speedy and radical Reform in the system of Parliamentary Representation; and you are also in possession of the circumstances of our having sent two Delegates (———) to represent our increasing Society in that respectable assembly. The Society for Constitutional Information also elected two Representatives (———) the latter only of whom has gone to Scotland for the discharge of his important mission.

Citizens, the object of our present letter is to inform you of the important communications which our mission has already produced. The spirit and resolution it has diffused through the respective Societies in Scotland—the rapid increase of the avowed friends of liberty, which has already made its appearance, and the prospects which have been opened before us of the most complete union, the most determined perseverance, the most active exertion in every constitutional measure, that *can be devised for the recovery of our rights, and the complete renovation of the liberties and happiness, which as men we are entitled to, and, as Britons, we have been taught to expect.* An increase of affection, of zeal, of confidence; a concert of permanent union; a free communication and comparison of sentiments and intentions; mature deliberation and mutual reliance—these are the fruits of the wise and spirited measures adopted by the friends of liberty in Scotland, and seconded by the Societies of London and of Ireland.

Britons, and Fellow Citizens! let us rouse you to immediate co-operation with these efforts for the general good;—let us awake you to a sense of the importance of the present moment, and persuade you, persuade all the Patriotic Societies in England, to strengthen immediate junction with this grand federation;—that as those who are hostile to our freedom are already united by compacts, interests, and coalitions, the friends also of that glorious principle may be bound together by a link more firm, more intimate, and more durable, to resist every oppression and usurpation that may be attempted, and vindicate the “Rights of Man.”

The Society at Norwich has already, in some degree, imitated our example: For though time and convenience did not permit them to elect a separate Delegate, they have sent a written authority to Citizen ——— to act for them in that capacity, together with instructions to enable him to state their sentiments to the Convention, and directions for him to correspond with them, and render their fraternity more complete.

Citizens!

Citizens! Permit us to unite our voices with those of our brethren in the North, to request you, by some such method (if you cannot render it convenient immediately to send a Delegate of your own) to assist the closer union, and more immediate communication of the respective Societies.—Persuaded as we are that the friends of liberty, if encouraged by the conviction of general union to step forward and avow their sentiments, are already so numerous and respectable as to ensure a speedy termination of the calamities of an unjustifiable war, and a restoration of every right to which Britons and Freemen are entitled:

We are, in the firm assurance of your zeal and sincerity in the cause of liberty, your affectionate Fellow Citizens.

P. S. I received your letter, and I sent it to Edinburgh according to your direction.

APPENDIX F. (No. 1.)

Sheffield, Committee Room of the Constitutional Society, May 27th, 1793.

Sir,

I am desired by the Committee of this Society to acknowledge the receipt of yours of the 10th current, and of the Caledonian Chronicle of the same date, containing the resolutions of the Convention of Delegates from the friends of the people throughout Scotland—of which this Committee and the Society also, to which they have been read at the several distinct meetings, highly approve.

This Committee did not answer your former letter, because they were unwilling to put you to any unnecessary expence of postage, especially as no alteration *could* then be made in the subject matter thereof. Any communication which you may be pleased to favour this Society with, will be certain to come to hand (barring accidents) if directed generally to Mr. _____ at _____ Church Lane, Sheffield. Though we have never had any miscarriage of letters which were directed to the Secretary of the Constitutional Society, yet that addition may perhaps be as well left out.—As to a proper channel; if the parcel is at any time *very bulky and weighty*, the waggon will be the best; but if a moderate size, it will come quicker by the coach: And the Committee will be very glad to receive accounts of proceedings so ably and patriotically conducted.

The committee beg leave to recommend to the Convention, and through its members to the several societies, to patronize and promote as much as possible the circulation of that most useful periodical work, the Patriot, which certainly contains abundance of truly important political information, and has done the most essential

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tial service to the cause of freedom and of the people in this part of the island.

I am desired to express the *particular approbation* of this committee, and society also, of the second resolution of the Convention, viz. "That the motion to discontinue their meetings when the petitions, &c. are presented, &c. is suspicious and insidious, &c. &c."

To shew how men, possessing the same principles, will at the greatest distance coincide and jump, as it were, into the same sentiments, and expression of them, I beg leave to send you a short extract from the address of our President, Mr. _____, at our last *general meeting*, which was taken in short hand, and which the committee hope they shall prevail on him to publish, as it is replete with political information, interesting anecdotes, and animated elocution.

"You have no doubt, fellow citizens, all heard the fate of the petition so lately sent from this town and neighbourhood for a parliamentary reform; and I should suppose that the unjust, indecent, and insolent manner in which it has been rejected, and opposed admission into the House of Commons by the satellites of Ministers, must have convinced you clearly, that the great cause for the support of which we have associated, demands our never ceasing vigilance and attention.

"A Reform in Parliament is almost *universally* allowed to be essentially necessary to the preservation of this country. And as that great and important event can never be brought about but by *the powerful Interposition of the great body of the People*, no lawful means should be left untried to remove the almost innumerable impediments which lie in the way to obstruct and prevent so desirable a communication. The enemies to reform are a very active, numerous, and powerful body in almost every neighbourhood, and never fail to unite on the smallest appearance of any circumstance which they conceive may be prejudicial to the corrupt and baneful system that has too long prevailed, and which it is so much their interest to continue.

"Our common enemies, I say, form an active, jealous, powerful, and well disciplined phalanx, long enured to every possible mode of attack which can be made upon them—thoroughly skilled in the science of defence—but more particularly so in circumventing and smothering every attempt that may be made against them while in its infancy, and before it can arrive at the power of doing them harm—witness the various attempts to discountenance, calumniate, and if possible, to annihilate constitutional Societies, the Patriot, and all publications similar to it; as in these they see, with terrified aspects, the future saviours of the people, and their dearest rights; with an all-grasping and domineering aristocratic influence, possessing the greatest share of landed property; with the purse of the nation at their command, and their eyes ever fixed on this ruling maxim, "*Divide et impéra*," they may be almost thought to be invincible, and nothing can avail against their efforts, but
equal

equal zeal, discipline, activity, and strict adherence together of the friends of the people, and the cause of freedom.

" You see then, Citizens, that (that) it particularly behoves us not to sleep upon our posts. The heavenly cherub Liberty is in danger of being annihilated and destroyed by a torrent of influence and corruption unexampled in the Annals of the world. It is time therefore, for all true lovers of their Country to exert every effort to preserve and cherish that (that) inestimable blessing, deprived of which, both life and property, by being rendered precarious and uncertain, become but secondary considerations. In this most laudable of all pursuits, that of promoting and forwarding the public welfare, it becomes the peculiar duty of every one of us to contribute all in our power, by public and private advice and Exhortation, to prevent his fellow labourers in this glorious Vineyard from lagging in so momentous, though perhaps so arduous a work; but let us remember that our brave and hardy ancestors often fought and bled at every vein, to transmit to us undiminished, a fair and unspotted inheritance to a constitution—the base, summit, and centre of which was founded and composed of *freedom*; a constitution which they raised by their valour, supported by their virtue and wisdom, and cemented with their blood.

" The Ravager time, the unsuspicious nature of some of our forefathers, added to their supineness and neglect, with other unfortunate circumstances on one hand, and on the other the gradual but never-ceasing endeavours to undermine and subvert the noble edifice, by every insidious and unperceived art and machination that base and interested men could devise—these sycophants of courts—these venal hirelings and male prostitutes, who feed and fatten without remorse on the spoil and plunder of their industrious and oppressed countrymen—these political Esaus, who would sell their country and its liberties for a mess of pottage, have brought us to the very brink of ruin, and the verge of slavery; and, wishing to delude us with the forms of the constitution have gone nigh to sap and destroy every prop and pillar by which the constitution itself is in reality supported.

" Be it ours, however, to keep in mind, that there is not in the whole range of human nature so degraded and despicable a sight as that of a nation, a people who were once free, having degenerated into slaves; and let us not ever forget, that notwithstanding we of the present day did not receive perfect freedom from our *immediate forefathers*, we still know that we have a just *claim* to it that it is our duty to prosecute that claim before our adversaries shall have the insolence to plead prescription as a bar to it. Though the *possession* is not in us, the *right* is, and we are bound to assert that right, and transmit it clear of all incumbrances to our posterity. What! shall we unremittingly prosecute our claim, and start indignant at the idea of being robbed, or unjustly deprived of a paltry cottage, or a few acres of dirty land; and shall we tamely and basely surrender those important rights and privileges which are more

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more valuable than all the acres that one man ever possessed? Forbid it, Consistency! Forbid it, Justice! Forbid it, Heaven!

"But how, it may be asked, how are we to prosecute our claims? How are we to recover those rights of which we have been surreptitiously deprived? I answer, by our fortitude and unanimity—by an inflexible perseverance in *demanding* those rights which no power on earth is entitled to withhold from us. A Reform in Parliament, I repeat, is absolutely necessary to save this country from ruin. I will tell you *why*," &c.—He then gives a display of the defective state of Representation; shews, that as things are now situated, no Administration, however inclined to do so, can govern according to the true principles of justice and sound policy, and the real interests of the people, *from the undue influence of the Crown*. Describes the Double Cabinet in a very severe strain of animadversion; takes notice, that the only argument attempted to be urged against the measure, is the impropriety of the time; and on every occasion, since its first being hazarded in 1692, the same bugbear has been uniformly opposed to it. "But let me ask these men, what is a proper time? In times of peace; in times of war; in times of financial depression; in times of prosperity; though the necessity of it was always admitted, still the time was improper. When Mr. Grey, in the last session, gave notice of his intended motion on this head, though we had been just before represented by the Apostate Pitt, in all the glare of his didactic pomposity, to be at that moment in a state of unexampled prosperity, yet then the time was improper.

"In the year 1764, after the conclusion of the war, this country was equally prosperous, and ranked infinitely higher in point of consequence amongst the nations of Europe, when we were feared and courted by every power in it, then, also, the time was improper; we were afterwards involved in a ruinous and expensive war with America, which drained this country of its citizens and its treasures, loaded us with an accumulation of taxes we were hardly able to bear, was prosecuted contrary to the wishes of the Nation, and Parliament still voting supplies out of the people's pockets. The system of corruption was obvious, clear as the sun at noon day, yet still it was not proper to agitate a reform! Notwithstanding it was at the same time granted, that if a reform had been made in the year 1764, all those subsequent notorious evils would have been prevented.

"The plain truth of the matter is this—In the eye of ministers and their followers, in the eye of placemen, pensioners, and the almost innumerable host of the greedy and voracious bloodsuckers and devourers of the spoil and plunder of the people, no time is proper. The argument is a stale worn-out trick of every minister and every venal tool who supports him; Charles Townsend used to say, petitions to this effect were improper at *two seasons*; the season of war, and the season of peace: In peace, because they tended to disturb the *general tranquillity*; and in war, because ministers had sufficient employment for their abilities without being troubled with petitions.

petitions. In this avowal of a minister there is certainly some *honesty*; but much more of what the Irish term *modest assurance*, or what a blunt Briton calls *downright impudence*.

"The same fallacious and delusive argument is made use of at the present moment; and those very apostates, who contended most warmly and vehemently, that a Reform in Parliament was absolutely necessary to save the Constitution, in 1785, have now the barefaced effrontery to assert, that it is *at present*, not only unseasonable, but *absolutely unnecessary*—Citizens, reflect on this; be no longer deceived; convince yourselves first that it is necessary, and then determine resolutely, and like Englishmen worthy of their glorious ancestors, that in *matters of moment there is no time like the present*."

Thus ended a speech of near two hours, which convinced the Society of the absolute necessity there is to be more active and assiduous in the great cause we are engaged to support. It is remarkable, that at this meeting a motion was made to discontinue our monthly meeting, and to have them only once in three months, which was reprobated by the president, and scouted by the Society as *suspicious and insidious*; and the Society has greatly increased every day since.

The enclosed paper has had a very good effect in Manchester and this place, where it has been well circulated; and as Mr. Dundas has had the consummate effrontery to say in St. Stephen's, that *war is not the cause* of the present national distress, this Committee think too much pains cannot be taken to convince the people *that it is*. They therefore submit it to your consideration, whether it may not be advisable to reprint and circulate it in your town and neighbourhood.

In the name, and by order of the Committee,

I remain, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

(Signed) _____,

Secretary.

Addressed,

Mr. Wm. Skirving, Edinburgh.

No. 2.

Delegate Meeting of the Constitutional Society, Leeds, May 29, 1793.

SIR,

BY request of the Sheffield Society, and having received directions from them for the purpose of corresponding with all the Societies in England and Scotland,

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We, the Members of the Constitutional Society in Leeds, in order to obtain the desired end of Parliamentary Reform, desire fraternal communication with the Society of Edinburgh.

We shall be glad of any information or instruction in your power on all occasions; and hope you will find the Leeds Society always faithful to the interests of the people: And though they are but few, not exceeding two hundred, they are men, and are determined to exert their utmost in order to instruct their neighbours on their common interests.

With this we send you a copy of our address and declaration; and shall ever acknowledge all favours from you.

Wishing the cause we have embarked in every degree of success, I remain, in the name and by order of the Society,

Sir, yours, &c.

Addressed "To the Secretary of the Constitutional Society, Edinburgh;" and on the back, "To Mr. William Skirving, Edinburgh, Scotland."

No. 3.

Free Masons' Tavern, Saturday, the 18th of May 1793.

AT a General Meeting of the Society of the Friends of the People, associated for the purpose of obtaining a Parliamentary Reform, held this day,

_____ in the chair,

Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of this Society be returned to the Convention of Delegates at Edinburgh, for their zeal and activity in the cause of Parliamentary Reform; and to express a hope and wish that they will proceed with the same spirit, industry, and temper, during the interval between the present time and the meeting of the next session of Parliament.

In the name, and by order of the Society,

_____ Chairman.

No. 4.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to enclose you a copy of the Resolution of Thanks to the Convention of Delegates at Edinburgh, from the Friends of the People in London, and beg you will communicate the same to the various Societies with which you correspond in Scotland.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

_____ Secretary to the Committee.

No. 5.

SIR,

THE speech I sent is not the property of this Society; but, in compliance with the request contained in your letter, I have applied to the proprietor, who gives you full permission to reprint it, and distribute as many as you think proper. Your conduct on this occasion must give satisfaction to every friend of Reform.

When I again meet with any thing good and short, I will certainly send it to you. I suppose you have seen William Fox's pamphlets; they are very short, and extremely good indeed, particularly that against the war.

The plan of Delegates would be very improper in this country at present. A very small part of it indeed would be active for return. If such a meeting is attempted, it will operate (like many rash steps of some who wish well to the cause) much to its disadvantage.

I thank you for the parcel of minutes which is come to hand, and remain,

Yours, &c.

Addressed, William Skirving, Esq.
Edinburgh.

July 23, 1793.

No. 6.

DEAR SIR,

ON Saturday last I received a copy of Mr. Palmer's Trial; and on Monday several copies of Mr. Muir's; which I have ordered to be disposed of as directed. I had read both before—I shall bind them with Paine's Trial: and I return you and Mr. Muir thanks for them. I think Mr. Palmer's case, in some respects, still more extraordinary than Mr. Muir's—Is it a crime to advise prudence and moderation?

Be so kind as to desire Mr. Scott to send regularly the Edinburgh Gazetteer to me, under cover to C. Grey, Esq. M. P.—Let him charge it either to me or the Society, and I will pay for it at such times and in such manner as he desires.

I hope none of the violence which has done mischief to the cause of Reform in England, will be imported into the Scottish Convention.

The conduct of the Friends to Reform in Scotland has always been admired, and I hope their prudence and moderation will be continued.

I am, &c.

October 29th, 1793.

Addressed, Mr. W. Skirving, opposite the
Foot of the Old Assembly Close, Edinburgh.

No.

COMMONS' SECRET COMMITTEE.

No. 7.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

London, November 8th, 1793.

I DULY received your favour of the 4th instant, and laid it before the Committee of Delegates last night, who were anxiously waiting for intelligence from Edinburgh; and were well satisfied with the agreeable account of the great number and zeal of the Friends of Freedom in Scotland.—That part of your letter which mentioned your visiting different towns in Scotland, for the purpose of promoting the cause—they were pleased with the idea; but they thought that it could not be put in practice, on account of the necessary supplies; which come in but very slowly—it is to be mentioned in the different divisions.—We have elected _____ (by ballot) Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the quarter—we have also appointed a Committee of Constitution, separate from the Committee of Delegates.—One member is chose from each division, to meet on this night for the first time, and to be totally unconnected with the Committee of Delegates.—We still increase in number—and the Address to the King, to put an end to the war, is ordered to be advertised, to receive signatures, in the Courier, Chronicle, Ayre's Sunday Gazetteer, and afterwards by hand-bills, &c. We have opened a correspondence with a new Society at _____. I have to inform you of the wish of the Society, that you would favour them with the number of Delegates in the Convention, and the number from England also, and how the civil and military power relishes your meeting; and that you would send such a report from the Convention as might appear in the newspapers in London. Send me an Edinburgh Gazetteer when there is any thing in it of importance. I would have sent you a Courier; but they informed me that they sent several to the coffee-houses and taverns in Edinburgh: For that reason I thought it unnecessary. I hope to have more time to write to you more fully next time. As _____ says, the post just going off, no more at present from

_____. Secretary.

Addressed, Mr. Margatot, and }
Mr. Gerald, } Delegates from London.

No. 8.

To the Members of the Scotch Convention.

WORTHY SIRS,

THE notice we have had of your different meetings, being so date as not conveniently to allow of our election of a Delegate to join your Assembly, I take the freedom to communicate a few lines in the name of the Society. Our congratulations are your due, for the spirited manner in which you have shewn yourselves the advocates and promoters of Reformation. You, Citizens, have deserved well

well of your country, and your conduct is the subject of our applause—the strong sentiments you have imbibed are the objects of our admiration. Our minds particularly embrace the doctrines of the Right of Universal Suffrage, of the Necessity of Annual Returns, and of adopting these principles into a definitely worded Constitutional Code, alterable only by the expression of the general will of the British people, properly taken.

We doubt not of your sentiments of fraternity towards the patriots of our town, whose desire is to promote universal information and universal liberty.

The all-wise Father of men prosper your undertakings.

Secretary to the Leeds Constitutional Society,
pro tempore.

Leeds, Nov. 18th, 1793.

Addressed, Mr. William Skirving, Edinburgh.

No. 9.

SIR,

I HAVE the satisfaction to inform you, that the Delegates from the Societies in London have, at length, arrived at Edinburgh. Delegates from the other Societies, in England, and who are now upon the road, will soon also be here to wait upon the *Friends of the People*, in order to establish an *indissoluble fraternity* between the two nations, and to adopt those measures which, at this *awful period*, may have a tendency to save the country.

Solemnly pledged as you are to a common and a just cause, no hardship and no expence can be thought too great for you, while you are conscious that you are discharging your duty. With no propriety can you refuse to attend upon your brethren from England, who, at so much expence, and from so great a distance, have come to unite their affections and deliberations with you.

I *feel* it my duty, in coincidence with the sentiments of the General Committee here, again to recal the Societies by their Delegates to this place. Every moment is precious, and delay is synonymous to treachery.

I expect therefore, Sir, to have the honour of seeing you on the 19th current in the *General Convention of the Delegates*, in compliance with the public advertisement, which I was bound to insert in my official capacity, in the Gazetteer of yesterday; to which I entreat your particular attention.

If you cannot possibly attend, it will be proper to call the *Committee* of your Society to appoint one or two in your place. No exertion on the part of a friend should be wanting at this *important crisis* to render this Convention still more respectable; and none who have the *cause* at heart, and discern how *much is at stake*, will be remiss.

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Let it be our ardent prayer to God, that his wisdom may direct their measures, -and that his benediction may attend the execution of them.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
WILLIAM SKIRVING, Secretary.

Edinburgh, Nov. 7th, 1793.

No. 10.

Extracts from the Minutes of the General Convention of the Friends of the People, held at Edinburgh, and of their General Committee, convened in consequence of the arrival of the English Delegates, and of Citizen Hamilton Rowan and Simon Butler from Ireland, as mentioned in the foregoing Narrative.

October 29th, 1793. IN the first day's sitting of the Convention, Mr. C—— moved, "That this Convention resolve to claim for themselves and their constituents the Right of Universal Suffrage and Annual Parliaments."

At the same sitting a letter was read from the Four United Societies of Ireland.

Mr. Skirving read the thanks of the general meeting of the Friends of the People at Free Masons' Tavern, dated London, 18th of May, 1793, as returned by them to the Convention of Delegates at Edinburgh, for their zeal and activity in the cause of Parliamentary Reform. He also read a similar letter from Mr. ———, dated London, 5th October, 1793; another dated London, 25th October, 1793, respecting the appointment of Messrs. Margarot and Gerald.

Mr. Skirving next read a letter from Mr. ———, secretary to the Association at London, dated Frith-street, No. 7, October 16th, 1793.

Mr. ——— read a letter from the Constitutional Society at Sheffield, dated 27th of May, 1793, and signed ——— secretary, upon the whole object of Reform in general, containing some humorous remarks on the arguments advanced by the enemies of Reform; which were received with great approbation.—Mr. Skirving next read the printed paper contained in the said letter, addressed to the unemployed artificers, &c. of Manchester, and containing a number of excellent remarks upon the calamities of war, signed ——— Sidney."

In the general Committee it appears, that a Citizen, one of the Edinburgh Delegates, having moved that the London Delegates should state the situation of their Societies, Citizen Margarot answered, "That the Societies in London were very numerous, though sometimes fluctuating. In some parts of England whole towns are Reformers; Sheffield, and environs there, 50,000.—In Nor-
"wich

" which there are 30 Societies in one.—If we could get a Convention of England and Scotland called, we might represent six or seven hundred thousand males; which is a majority of all the adults in the kingdom; and ministry would not dare to refuse us our rights."

Citizen Butler, from Ireland, then said, " He did not know how far he was at liberty to say any thing, as he was not a Delegate; but he would give an account of Ireland. The executive part of the Government were almost omnipotent; the landed interest almost aristocratic; and the manufacturer idle.—Last Parliament was expected to have given Ireland emancipation: However flattering that prospect was, a few weeks changed the scene.—An infamous coalition took place between the opposition and ministry—the Catholics retired with what they had got—No longer opposed by them, the Government turned their oppressive measures against the Friends of Reform.—The United Irishmen were prosecuted: He himself had experienced six months imprisonment.—Belfast was declared to be in a state of rebellion—though Freedom was not cried up in the streets, yet it dwelt in almost every heart. Universal emancipation was the measure for which he was an advocate.—All that he knew of the country was, that the first day his friend was in Edinburgh he was arrested—for nothing that he knew, except it was for being so wicked as to come here.—In Scotland they yet met in Convention: In Ireland the Parliament had enacted laws against it.—When a law like that should take place here, he was afraid freedom would vanish."

Mr. C—— said, " That he hoped those that would pass such an Act of Parliament should be forced to eat it; and hoped that Scotland and England should not submit to it."

Citizen Gerald said, " That he came here armed with the power of Delegation—If our neighbour's house is on fire, the greater should be our vigilance to prevent the flames seizing our own.—A parchment piece of justice had been presented in Ireland: He hoped that if ever it was passed here, we should throw it in the face of our oppressors. Every thing the people had gained had been through Conventions—the Revolution was the consequence of a Convention;—The Revolution established, that trust abused was revocable—the Revolution excluded all placemen and pensioners—Do we enjoy any benefit from that act? It made Ministers responsible—how many bad Ministers have we seen go down to the grave in peace, and honoured with all the dignities a King can confer! Union would carry our principles into execution—A citizen from Ireland told you, that as soon as the alarm bell was rung, the Opposition joined the Minister—Party is ever a bird of prey, and the people their banquet."

19th Nov. 1793. On the first day's sitting of the Convention, after it was resumed, Mr. Margarot moved, " That previous to publishing an address to the Public, a Committee be forthwith appointed to consider the means, and draw up the outlines of a plan of general union and co-operation between the two nations in their

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Constitutional pursuit of a thorough Parliamentary Reform;" which was unanimously agreed to.

The minutes of the second day's sitting bear, "That Citizen * Gerald vindicated the plan of divisions, as tending to enable the " Convention to make up their minds upon the business to come " before them."—Mr. Margarot vindicated the plan, as tending to shorten the business of the Convention, and insisted that the familiar intercourse that would take place in these divisions, would be the chief use of them."

"—Another Delegate shewed the necessity and importance of the *plan of organization*, and insisted that the divisions were necessary, and that the loss of a day or two was of no consideration, compared with the magnitude of the object."

"Mr. Margarot promised, in name of himself and his colleagues from England, that they would grudge no time to execute with propriety the important business they were come upon."

"The Delegate from Sheffield rose to remove any remaining objections that might be made against the plan. He urged, that the grand point in raising a good superstructure, was to lay a good foundation; to do which no time should be grudged; and shewed the great utility of the plan in the nomination of Committees."

"And the Convention were accordingly divided into divisions, and places appointed for their meetings."

Mr. Margarot of New, moved, "That a Committee be appointed to consider of and draw up a proper plan of union between the two Nations, according to the resolution of yesterday."

In the sitting of the 21st of November, in consequence of reports from the different sections, a Committee of thirteen was chosen to form an union upon Mr. Margarot's plan.

In the same meeting Gerald stated, "That to honest men nothing was so valuable as truth, and that nothing can possibly tend so much to the disclosure of truth as discussion and deliberation. That it was also very important that the Committee should know as much as possible of the public mind, in order that they might act in union with it. The Convention then resolved itself into a Committee upon the motion of Mr. ———; and many valuable hints were thrown out by Citizens ***** Gerald observed, That whatever difference of opinion might exist in these walls, we can never forget that our friends and our enemies are in common, and that our object is equally the same. He took a review of the means we are to use in order to secure our object. He entered fully into the subject of Universal Suffrage and Annual Parliaments. He fully proved the rights of the people to those benefits by their ancient Constitution. He minutely investigated the principles of government. He asserted, That the end of all government is the good of the governed: That if money be taken out of his pocket against his consent, it is of little consequence whether it be taken by the robber on the heath or the monarch on the throne. He made many remarks upon the Revolution settlement, and the benefits gained by the last Revolution; and demonstrated clearly, that *they are now to-*

tally taken away. He warned the Convention against the choice of any other than known and plain men like themselves; men uncontaminated by the pestilential air of courts."

A Delegate from London, during this day's sitting, in absence of ———, a Scotch Delegate, "gave in the continuation of the Committee's Report respecting the election of presidents, of three assistants, one to go out daily; and respecting the council of the table." He likewise proposed, "That the whole Reports of the Committee should be delayed till the report was completed; and urged as a reason for delay, that * * * was employed in completing the Report of the Committee."

The Fifth Day's Sitting. Convention Hall, Nov. 23d, 1793.

Citizen GERALD appointed Chairman.

"CITIZEN ——— having read the minutes of last sitting, the President stated, That this morning he had received a letter from our friends in Norwich, who desired him to inform the Convention, that they remained steady in the cause, and had nominated Citizen Margarot their Delegate; and that they would contribute their share of the expences attending the Convention. Mr. Margarot accordingly accepted of the office; who congratulated the Convention upon the accession of such a great number of friends."

During this sitting there is the following motion: "It was moved, that from henceforth the Convention should be styled *The British Convention of the Delegates of the People*, associated to obtain Universal Suffrage and Annual Parliaments." Agreed to unanimously. Also this other motion: "A motion was also made, for the Convention allowing the Members of the United Society of Irishmen to speak and vote here."—

"Referred to the Sections."

Citizens ———, who were country Delegates, "requested leave of absence; which was granted, upon condition that they would do their utmost to send Delegates in their place."

In the same sitting there are the following motions: viz.

"Motion by Mr. ——— respecting dividing the country into departments and appointing provincial Conventions; whereby they may become more acquainted with each other's sentiments."

"Referred to the Committee of Union."

"Motion by ———, containing thanks to the movers of the division into classes, mentioning the advantages already obtained from it, and requesting a fresh shuffle. Referred to the Committee of Regulations, and agreed that the Members of Societies in Edinburgh join the sections"—and this day's *federunt* closes as follows: "The President warned the sections to meet as full as possible on Monday."

"Citizen ———'s motion, relative to admitting the Members of the United Society of Irishmen to speak and vote in this Convention, came forward for discussion, when Citizens ——— spoke upon it, and agreed to and guaranteed by a solemn joining of hands —it

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—it being followed by a motion for transmitting the above resolution to Citizen Archibald Hamilton Rowan; which was passed accordingly."

"Secretary Skirving stated, That he had just now received five shillings from an unknown hand, for the use of the Convention. Honourable mention was ordered to be made of this patriotic donation."

"A motion made by — respecting the appointment of an Interim Committee at the end of every Convention, to call together the *Delegates on extraordinary emergencies*."

At the close of this meeting, the Convention being divided into sections, a delegate moved, "That the motions should be laid before the *sections*; and desired the *council of the table* to condescend on those that were to be first discussed."

Seventh Day's Sitting. 26th November, 1793.

AFTER debate, an original motion was referred to the Committee of Finance.

"Ordered, That the Convention shall cause a regular set of books to be kept for the insertion of minutes, motions, and other proceedings: A book of finance, &c. to be at all times subject to the inspection of an intermediate Committee."

"All these motions were ordered to lie over, to be considered by the sections."

"Mr. —'s motion being taken under consideration, amendments were proposed by Citizens — — —."

"Mr. Margarot pled for adopting the spirit of Mr. —'s motion; but thought it would be more advantageous to postpone adopting it till the conclusion of the Convention's business."

"Moved by Mr. Margarot, That a Committee, consisting of the Mover, Seconder, and those who had moved for amendments of Mr. —'s motion, be appointed to draw up a motion from the whole, that may probably meet the ideas of the whole Convention.—After some conversation, it was agreed upon, on the motion of Mr. —, That the vote of the House be put, 1st, On the spirit of Mr. —'s motion; 2dly, On the words of the motion; and 3dly, On Mr. Margarot's motion." Agreed.—"The sense of the House being taken on the first, it carried unanimously, To adopt the motion as to the spirit of it.—On the second it carried by a great majority, Not to adopt the motion as so worded—and 3dly, it was resolved, That the said motion, and all amendments, be referred as above."

Convention Hall, 28th November, 1793.

Ninth Day's Sitting.

Citizen ——— in the Chair.

"CITIZEN ——— read the amendments upon Citizen —'s motion, as agreed upon by the Committee; and it was agreed,
d d z That

That the House should resolve itself into a Committee for its mature consideration."—In the course of the conversation, Citizen — gave a history of the Habeas Corpus Act.—After an excellent discussion of the question, pertinent remarks, and amendments, the Convention was resumed, and the whole, as amended, being read over, the Members stood upon their feet, and passed the resolution unanimously, as follows.

[Here a blank is left in the minutes, as mentioned in the Report.]

After the said resolution was agreed to and solemnly approved of as above, the minutes import, "That Citizen Gerald, in an energetic and animated speech, addressed the meeting, and expressed his happiness at the motion passed; and exposed the act of the Irish Parliament, called a Convention Bill—and Citizen *** followed him in a manly speech, and proved the influence of the executive government over the Parliament."

Citizen Margarot read and proposed the following motion: "That a Secret Committee, of three, with the Secretary, be appointed to determine the place where such Convention of Emergency shall meet; that such place shall remain a secret with them, and with the Secretary of this Convention; and that each Delegate shall, at the breaking up of the present session, be entrusted with a sealed letter, containing the name of the place of meeting; that this letter shall be delivered unopened to his constituents, the receipt to which shall be acknowledged by a letter to the Secretary—preserved in the same state until the period shall arrive at which it shall be deemed necessary for the Delegates to set off. This motion was seconded by ***, and the same passed unanimously. Accordingly the following Citizens were nominated a Secret Committee upon this business, viz. Margarot, *****, with the Secretary; and they were requested to devise the best possible means of conveying this intimation to those Societies whose views are the same with ours, but may not have Delegates at this time."

The minutes of this day's sitting close with a variety of motions; and amongst others the following, by Citizen ***, and seconded by Citizen ***, "That a fund be raised by subscription for defraying the expence of small patriotic publications, to be distributed in the Highlands. Every publication shall bear the figure of a Highlandman in full dress, with target and broadsword, to attract the attention of Highlandmen. No publication to cost more than half a penny."

By Citizen ***, "*That a Committee be appointed to draw up a declaration of the natural, unalienable, and unprescriptible rights of Man; and that the same be prefixed to an address to the people of Great-Britain.*"

And, "That a Committee of Observation be appointed in London, to give the earliest intimation of any motion of the kind mentioned in the foregoing resolution to the different Societies."

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*Convention Hall, first Year of the British Convention, 29th Nov.
Anno Domini 1793.—Tenth Day's Sitting.*

Citizen *** in the Chair.

"Citizen Margarot gave in the report of the Committee of Regulations; which was ordered to be printed, and copies to be given in to the *sections* on Monday, for their consideration."

"The Secretary read ***'s motion for a *Committee of Observation* to be appointed in London. Citizen Margarot stated, That there was no occasion for a Committee of that nature in London, as there were several thousands of people in that city upon the look-out. It was accordingly agreed, *That the Convention should request the London Committee of Correspondence to give the earliest intelligence of what passed in Parliament.*"

"A letter from a friend, &c. which had been transmitted to A. Scott, of the *Gazetteer*, was read, containing patriotic sentiments, and two guineas; and Citizen Taylor presented a guinea from another citizen, whose name he was not at liberty to mention.—It was stated by the Secretary, that a citizen from London was present, who was to give 5*l.* 5*s.* to the Convention, when a collection should be made for enlightening the Highlanders. The thanks of the House was unanimously given to the before-mentioned patriots for their donations."

Eleventh Day's Sitting. 30th November, 1793.

"The Secretary read a motion, That a Committee be appointed to revise each day's minutes immediately on the rising of the Convention, for the purpose of sending them to the press, to make hereafter a daily bulletin of the same. The question being put, the motion passed unanimously."

"Citizen ——— likewise moved, That no person should be allowed the *honours of the sitting*, unless recommended by two members; which with amendments, as in the motion itself, passed unanimously."

"The Secretary read a motion for publishing the natural, unalienable, and unprescriptable Rights of Man, which was ordered to be given to the Committee of Union."

"It was moved, That Captain *** should report some circumstances to the Convention; for which purpose the House resolved itself into a Committee, when he read an account of the trial and sentence of D. Holt, for reprinting the Duke of Richmond and Mr. Pitt's resolution for a Parliamentary Reform; after which, the Chairman being replaced, the Secretary moved, that Captain *** should be allowed the *honours of the sitting*."

"Citizen **** from Strathaven, and *** from Hamilton, requested leave of absence should be granted, and moved that all the Delegates who had left the Convention, should receive letters to return immediately, and remain at their posts until the important business which was daily introduced into the Convention should be properly discussed."

"A mo-

"A motion to fine those Members who did not attend their sessions—The order of the day was called for."

"A motion for drawing out a scroll of a petition to Parliament; which being read, *The order of the day was moved upon it.*"

Monday, 2d December 1793. First Year British Convention.

Twelfth Day's Sitting.

Citizens *** in the chair, and Citizens *** and *** assistants at the table.

"Citizen Skirving insisted that all the Members, both of the Convention and Primary Societies, should subscribe a solemn league and covenant."

"Citizen Gerald pled for liberty of sentiment; and compared the people and their enemies, to the worshippers of the true God and of Baal. He afterwards read some paragraphs from the Edinburgh Herald, with suitable comments; and compared the Constitution of 1688 to a dead horse. He shewed the insipidity of the title "Gentleman," and the propriety of the term "Citizen;" remarked the impropriety of the mode of promulgating our laws, by restricting them to be sold by one printer, and published in the Saxon character, which few can read."

"Citizen Skirving also pled for the motion, and insisted that it was proper, on all occasions, to take the opinion of the Primary Societies, and considered *the Convention as only a Committee of the People.*"

"Citizen Margarot pled in favour of the motion. The approbation given by the *many thousands of their constituents in London, Sheffield, Norwich, Leeds, &c.*"

"The motion being agreed to, with one dissentient voice, who afterwards acceded, Citizen *** read a spirited advertisement from the Nottingham Society, inserted in a Sheffield newspaper."

"A motion made by Citizen ***, and seconded by Citizen ***, That the Convention shall pass some resolutions respecting the late unprecedented and unwarrantable infringements on the freedom of the press, particularly the arbitrary sentence of Judge Wilson against Mr. Holt, for reprinting the Duke of Richmond and Mr. Pitt's plan of Reform."

"Citizens *** and *** moved, That this Convention take under consideration whether (after the contemptible manner in which the late petitions for Parliamentary Reform were treated) they shall again petition for Reform, or at what period they should recommend the same to their constituents."

At the thirteenth Day's Sitting.

Citizen ***, of Sheffield, produced a commission from the Leeds Constitutional Society, appointing him their Delegate; which was approved of by the Convention.

The

The minutes of the fourteenth day's sitting are begun and entered thus :

" *Edinburgh, 4th November 1793.*

" *Fourteenth Sitting of the B. Convention.*"

In the above, *November* is, by mistake, inserted in place of *December*.

" Mr. Margarot begged leave to bring in a motion to the effect, That the moment of the illegal dispersion of the present Convention be considered as our summons to repair to the place of meeting appointed for the Convention of Emergency by the Secret Committee; and that the same motion be considered this evening.

" The Convention then heard the only two motions on their table read, which regarded the same matter; and it being objected to, that the business of these motions was to be taken up to-morrow evening, after some conversation, it was carried by a vote of the House to delay further consideration till to-morrow evening. Mr. Margarot being prepared to bring forward his motion above-mentioned, the same was taken under consideration, and was as follows :

" Moved, That the moment of any illegal dispersion of the British Convention shall be considered as a summons to the Delegates to repair to the place of meeting appointed for the Convention of Emergency by the Secret Committee; and that the Secret Committee be instructed to proceed, without delay, to fix the place of meeting.

" The Convention, having considered the motion fully, unanimously resolved the same, and appointed the Secret Committee to proceed as directed."

A Delegate from Glasgow presented to the sections, during the sitting of this Convention, a motion of the following tenor; viz.

The delegation from Glasgow moves, that the Convention take into their consideration the nature and extent of a resolution adopted by their constituents, and by most of the other Societies in Scotland, and afterwards ratified and approved of the General Convention held at Edinburgh in December 1792, the import of which was, that if any Member of their Society associated for the purpose of obtaining a Parliamentary Reform should, while in the legal prosecution of that object, be oppressed or persecuted by the arm of power, they should not only meet with the assistance of the Society to which they belong, but also by the united efforts of all their brethren in Scotland.

Since the above period, however, we are sorry to say, several of our Members have been persecuted, and that in a most wanton manner, and the above resolution (which, if duly put in force would, we humbly apprehend, have the happy effect of emboldening those who have already come forward, and of encouraging others who have not yet taken any active part, to unite their efforts in the general cause) has never yet been attended to.

We

We therefore humbly move, That the Convention take into consideration the above particulars, and consider what measures may be most conducive towards the performance of the obligation we lie under, in consequence of that resolution, and thereby shew to the world that we are not unmindful of those who have already suffered, or may in future suffer in their country's cause.

By order of the Delegation,

* * *

Edinburgh, October 30th, 1793.

No. 11.

Extract of a Letter from Mr. Margarot to the Norwich Societies, dated Edinburgh, 24th November 1793.

YOU know that at our arrival here we found that the Convention had, after sitting four days, adjourned, and the Delegates were all gone back to their respective habitations, without proceeding any farther in the business of Reform, than simply agreeing that nothing short of Universal Suffrage and Annual Parliaments would satisfy them, and on that ground proposing not to send any petition to the King or to the Parliament, lest by so doing the enemies of Reform might be tempted to counteract their wish, and exert themselves to prevent a peace; but at the same time it was recommended by the Convention, that all friends to Reform should sign any petition for peace, which might originate in another quarter. We soon prevailed on the Edinburgh Committee to recal the adjourned Convention; the Country Societies, informed that England meant to take a serious part in the great cause, sent back all their former Delegates, and several of them who had not sent Delegates to the prior Convention, have sent some to this one. On Tuesday the 19th instant the Convention opened. The number of Delegates amounted to 180; some of them came even from so far as Cromartie; the reception we experienced was highly flattering; we mutually gave and received encouragement and animation. I shall not at present attempt to give you a minute detail of what has since passed, because the minutes are to be printed, and then I will not fail sending you a few copies of them, and will, I hope, be able at my return to come to Norwich, and give you an accurate verbal account of every transaction; mean time, if you have any instructions to give me, send them without delay, otherwise I shall act for you conformably to those laid down by the London Corresponding Society, a copy of which you doubtless have received from them. The Convention have begun by establishing a set of rules for the organization of the present and even future Conventions; next we established a Committee of Union between the two nations, a Committee of Finance, and a Committee to take into consideration the protecting or establishing a patriotic newspaper. And on Saturday last we passed a provisory decree of union, the whole Convention, standing hand in hand,

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hand, solemnly pledged themselves to each other to renounce all national distinctions, to abide firmly and truly by each other, until the great end is obtained, and at the same time we assumed the title of *The British Convention of Delegates of the People, associated to obtain Universal Suffrage, and Annual Parliaments.*

No. 12.

Copy of a Letter from Messrs. Gerald and Margatot to the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society.

Citizen — Edinburgh, Tuesday, December 2d, 1793.

We received last night a letter signed by you, but written by another person, acquainting us with the determination of the Committee, "that at the adjournment of the Convention we should re-
turn immediately to London." This determination we will undoubtedly conform unto, unless it be (as we hope and trust it will) contradicted in your next; for, if the Committee abides by it, we, who, by being on the spot, and thoroughly acquainted with the state of the country, can judge with certainty thereon, do assure you that *our immediate return to London* will be attended with very bad consequences, for at present all the Country Societies look up to us to come among them *to enliven, to encourage them, to convince them by our presence*, that we exist, that we have been sent from England for the purposes of *Union and Reform*, and that the time is near at hand when such Reform must take place. Nothing, dear friends, must force us from Scotland at present but the absolute impossibility of bearing the expences attending our mission, and those expences may be somewhat lessened by recalling one of us, and leaving the other; our Norwich friends may likewise bear a part of them; so that, unless the funds of the Society are very low indeed, no excuse for recall can be valid, unless founded on fear; and that we must remind you is our concern, not yours. While, therefore, the idea of uniting our Society with the whole kingdom of Scotland affords you a pleasing prospect, let us do every thing in our power to cement that union, and this can only be done by a longer residence in the country, and by visiting the several Societies which have sent Delegates to Edinburgh, and would think themselves ill used if we did not take their town in our way. Consider of it therefore, we beseech you, and let us have your answer immediately.

The Convention proceed with great spirit. We sit daily; and last week we came to a resolution which we fancy will give pleasure to every friend to Reform; as the minutes are to be printed, we will, at present, only give you the heads of it; viz.

That should any attempt be made by Government for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Bill, the introduction of a Convention Bill, or the landing of foreign troops in Great Britain or Ireland, the Delegates are immediately to assemble in Convention at a certain place, the appointment of which is left with a Secret Committee. That when seven Delegates shall be thus assembled, they shall declare them-

selves *permanent*; and when their number amounts to twenty-one they shall proceed to business. Thus you see we are providing against what may happen.

Citizen Gerald's health is so far recovered as not to prevent him from fully attending his duty. We cannot say as much of Citizen Sinclair, from the Society for Constitutional Information; he has been confined to his bed ever since Saturday by a violent fever and sore throat; he is somewhat better this morning. He is a valuable young man; and, should he die, his loss would be severely felt; not indeed by his constituents, who have basely abandoned him, but by all the friends of freedom. He is a Member of our Society, and we recommend him to your notice.

You will before this have received our last of the 26th instant, acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 23d, together with a remittance of £12:12s. Our time is so constantly employed that we find it absolutely impossible as yet to write to you more than once a week, and even that on no fixed day: Eighteen hours out of the four and twenty are devoted to public business, and you may rest assured they are not mispent. We are happy to hear that you go on as well in the South as we do in the North.—Letters convey *but very imperfectly*, and *with no great degree of safety*, what we might wish to inform each other of.—You have done us a material injury by neglecting to send us a parcel of our publications, and a number of copies of *The Jurymen's Right*, pray do not delay them any longer, and among them some of the *Letters to Dundas*. We sent you an *Edinburgh Gazetteer* last week, we will send you another to-morrow: You will therein see part of what has passed in the Convention.

We remain,

Most sincerely,

Your Fellow Labourers in the Cause of Reform,
JOSEPH GERALD, Delegate.
M^{rs}. MARGAROT, Delegate.

M. M. would be glad to receive a line from T. H. about private business of his own.

No. 13.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. Margarot to the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society.

Fellow Citizen,

Edinburgh, 8th December 1793.

We desire that a copy of the inclosed papers be kept by the Society, and that another *copy of them be delivered, without delay, to Citizen Martin, in order that he may proceed thereupon immediately.*

You will already have had confused accounts of what has taken place here for the last four days; but on Tuesday next the *Edinburgh Gazetteer* shall (if despotism permit) give you a complete detail of every thing. The Society will thereby be able to discover that

that an arrival in Scotland has been productive of great advantage to the cause, and at the same time has given great alarm to our enemies. We are very much surprised at the remissness of the Society; while we are exposing our life and liberty, while we are devoting our time and our exertions to their service, while we are incurring numberless expences, and affronting dangers that would stagger the most hardy of them, while we are doing all this, we are moreover obliged to remind them of it, *and that supplies are now become more necessary than ever*; surely the pecuniary exertions of any individual in the Society, *can never be compared to our endeavours*: Honoured with their confidence, we find ourselves happy in being placed in the front of the battle; but let them remember that our sacrificing ourselves will be of little use, unless they afford us a proper support, and that most immediately. Not daring any longer to trust to the post, we send you all these papers in a parcel. You will be so good as to make us acquainted with their safe arrival—Gerald wishes to get to London as soon as possible, he will communicate that which cannot be so fully expressed by letter; you may consider this as a private letter, but you may read such parts of it as you think proper to any Member of the Society, especially where it may be productive of good.—You will see by the inclosed papers, that *power* has proceeded in a most arbitrary manner, almost all the prominent characters in the Convention have been, or are to be apprehended and examined—Lord Daer will, we believe, meet with no greater favour than ourselves; we understand that there is a warrant out against him. As an account of what has happened to us would exceed the bounds of a letter, we will only just give you a sketch of it, by way of journal, referring you, as we said before, to next Tuesday's Gazetteer.

Thursday Morning, at 7 o'clock.

A Sheriff's officer, followed by five other men, entered our bed room, informed us he had a warrant (which however he refused to shew) for apprehending us, and seizing our papers; we remained confined all day, at night we were examined and admitted to bail, each in the sum of 2,000 merks.

Friday Morning, 9 o'clock.

We were sent for again without a warrant, for the purpose of being present at the opening of a small trunk, containing our papers; but M. M. protesting against the illegality of the whole of the proceedings, and refusing to give up the key, the Sheriff Substitute and the Procurator Fiscal dared to proceed no farther in the business.

Saturday Morning, 9 o'clock.

Two messengers came again into our room, with Gerald; they left a summons to appear at 10 o'clock, with M. M. They left nothing but a request to accompany Gerald to the office; yet, when arrived there, he found that a warrant was issued against him, for the purpose of detaining him a prisoner, while the box was opened,

and the papers examined. M. M. still persisting in his refusal, the key was forced from him, the trunk was opened, the papers examined, and partly restored; the other part was kept, and a declaration drawn up, which he was required to sign, but refused, protesting against the whole of the business.—Gerald, however, signed what was drawn up in his name, and we were once more liberated; and since then, now already 24 hours, no further persecution has been commenced against us. But while we, as individuals, were thus harassed (Thursday) the whole Convention were equally ill used.—Many of them were taken into custody; and when the remainder met, as usual, the Provost, attended by his myrmidons, went, and, after pulling ——— of Sheffield, out of the chair, ordered the Convention to disperse, and informed them that he would allow no such meeting in future. (Friday) The next day, the Convention having agreed to meet at another place, out of the jurisdiction of the Provost, we had not been long assembled, before the Sheriff, with his myrmidons, appeared among us, and commanded us to depart, after having asked whether that meeting was the British Convention, and being answered in the affirmative. He next inquired who was the President; upon which M. M. having openly asked and obtained leave of the Convention, placed himself in the chair; informed the Sheriff, that he, M. M. was the President of the British Convention, and that he would not break up the meeting, unless unconstitutionally forced thereto, by the Sheriff's pulling him out of the chair; which the latter (after some little hesitation) having complied with, the ex-president (Gerald) was also put into the chair, which he would not leave but by being pulled out; adjourned the Convention to the place where it was to become permanent in its sittings; and having called upon his colleague, Gerald, for to close the meeting with prayer, the company departed peaceable, but not without various reflections on the proceedings, and those reflections not confined merely to the Members of the Convention, but coming also from the crowd without doors, and even from the attending Constables. The next day a proclamation was issued by the Provost, forbidding all assembling within the limits of his jurisdiction. We know not what will happen; but we venture to predict, that all this persecution will increase rather than diminish the ardour of the people for Reform. The Country Societies, hearing of this, are hourly pouring in fresh Delegates. Want of paper forbids my writing any more.

Adieu! Yours,

M. M.

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APPENDIX G.

Extract from the Evidence taken on the 22d of May 1794, before the Privy Council.

THOMAS THOMPSON, Esq. Member for Evesham, attending their Lordships, was called in, and asked, If he was a Member of the Constitutional Society? to which he answered, 'That he was.

Extracts from his Evidence.

Q. How long have you been a Member of this Society?

A. I cannot exactly recollect, but think about last Christmas.

Q. Did you attend the meetings of the Society regularly?

A. When I was in town I did.

Q. Was you present on the 28th of March, when a letter was read from the London Corresponding Society, of the 27th of March, with certain resolutions [*which were shewn to Mr. Thompson in the book*] inclosed, and a resolution and order thereupon made by the Constitutional Society?

A. I was.

Q. Were you present at a meeting of 4th April, when a resolution was made respecting the appointment of Delegates to confer, &c.?

A. I do, upon consideration, recollect it—but I opposed the appointment of a Convention.—Another person and I decidedly and loudly opposed it, and went away, understanding that it had passed in the negative—I opposed it on the grounds of its being a bad and improper mode of proceeding—and that it would be better to present a petition to Parliament—I do not recollect that any other person besides myself and the person already named opposed this proposition.

Q. You recollect, then, being present upon the 4th of April?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you remember a deputation being appointed to confer with the London Corresponding Societies?

A. I do remember an agreement to appoint a Delegation; but I do not recollect the names of the persons of whom that Delegation was to consist.

Q. Do you recollect the subsequent resolution for appointing a Committee of Correspondence?

A. I do not recollect it; but rather think I went away before it passed—I usually left the Society before it broke up, as I slept in the country, and of course many resolutions were passed after I went away.

Q. Do you think it right to state what you particularly recollect of the resolution respecting the appointment of a Convention?

A. I recollect the opposing it, with the person already named; and I recollect it was carried in the negative.

Q. Is

Q. Is it entered on the books of the Society, that the motion for appointing a Convention was negatived?

A. I do not know; but it certainly was carried in the negative—I recollect leaving the Society with a firm conviction that it had been negatived; and I have since talked with the person already named on the subject, who understood so, as well as myself.

Q. Can you state the name of any person who opposed the appointment of a Convention, except yourself and the person you have named?

A. I cannot—that person was against it from the first mention of such an idea.

Q. Was there any debate upon it?

A. There was.

Q. Do you recollect the names of any of the persons who spoke for the appointment of a Convention?

A. I do not—there was a good deal of confusion.

Q. Did you ever see the printed resolutions of the Society?

A. I do not recollect that I did.

Q. Have you any reason to believe that the resolution against the appointment of a Convention was reduced to writing?

A. Probably it was: I made a memorandum of it, as I took minutes myself; I always did so for my own satisfaction, and to refer to upon occasion—The memorandum I made on this occasion, stated particularly that it had been carried that no Convention should take place. I was always decidedly against Delegates being sent from the different Societies and towns. I took minutes even of what passed at the meetings of the Friends of the People, though I think them very safe persons.

Q. Have you any one of these memorandums?

A. I have not—I have looked for them, and could not find one—They were upon scraps of paper; and not thinking them of importance, I did not preserve them.

Q. As you opposed the formation of a Convention, what did you conceive the Convention was to do if it did meet?

A. I opposed a Convention, having seen the evils of it in other places; and not thinking it the best means of obtaining the object in view.

Mr. Thompson having attended the Committee of Secrecy appointed by the House, his evidence before the Privy Council was read to him; and he was asked, If he wished to state any thing in explanation of that evidence?

Mr. Thompson desired to explain and alter it; and observed, that in the account given of his evidence before the Council, he is stated to have said, that at the meeting on the 4th of April he does not recollect any other person besides the person he mentioned to the Privy Council, and himself, opposed the proposition for a Convention; he now begs to say, that he meant to say, that he does not recollect what other persons, besides himself and the person before alluded to, opposed that proposition.

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It is stated in the evidence, that Mr. Tooke signed the letter to request a contribution for Mr. Skirving, Mr. Thompson meant to say he was to sign the letter, as Chairman of the evening.

It is stated in the evidence, that he was asked, If he ever saw the printed resolutions of the Society? To which he is stated to answer, He did not recollect he did: Mr. Thompson desires to say, that he had never seen before the book shewn to him by the Attorney General at the time that question was put to him.

And as to the last question, Whether he had ever attended any meeting since the 2d of May? he begged now to say, that he went once, with an idea of taking his name out of the books of the Society.

With respect to Mr. Thompson being present when the toasts were drank; he begged to say he certainly was, but that he did not drink them all, being unwell, and the wine being bad.—On being shewn the toasts at the Council, he said, he thought some of them very absurd.

Mr. Thompson was then asked by the Committee,

If there was any individual, besides the person before alluded to, that joined you in opposition to the proposition for a Convention?

I cannot recollect; but there must have been several, as the question was negatived.

When and where did Mr. Thompson first see or hear the list of those toasts?

From the Attorney General in the Privy Council Room. Mr. Thompson was not present at any meeting of the Stewards when the toasts were drawn up, previous to the dinner.

Do you recollect Mr. Sharpe being present on the 11th of April, during the debate on a proposed resolution containing the word "Convention?"

I do not.

Have you any recollection of Mr. Horne Tooke, in the course of such a debate, remarking, that the debate about the word "Convention" was all nonsense; it was only between a Latin word and an English one?

I do not.

APPENDIX H.

Copy of a Letter from the Bristol Society for Constitutional Information to the London Corresponding Society.

Fellow Citizens,

Bristol, 28th January 1794.

I AM again authorised to write to you, signifying the gratitude of our Society for your second epistle, which came to my hands the 3d inst. After reading its contents, I collected as many of our friends as I conveniently could that evening; we read, we blushed, we

we took courage; we did more, for we resolved on re-assembling, as we had appointed prior to the determination we announced in our last. We intend publishing an address, or something declaratory of our sentiments, with all convenient speed; as soon as this is effected, we shall send a copy or copies to you. From The Courier and Evening Gazette, we have had information of the trial of Mr. Margat, and his sentence to 14 years transportation. We are by no means at a loss in forming a judgment of the noble cause in which he with others are embarked, *nor would we be frightened at such sentences.* You see, Citizens, your second epistle has quickened our courage, and vivified our patriotism, and roused us to resolution; and more, *our number is now considerably increased*; perhaps your third epistle may do greater things still; we are sensible 'tis a noble, 'tis a virtuous, 'tis a godlike and immortal cause in which we are now mutually embarked; and though for parts our effort can be but a feeble one, yet the cause we espouse is mighty, is energetic; it will finally prevail and prosper: It is our firm opinion, could we but arouse them, that patriots would become nearly the majority of our city. We expected to have had the dozen of The Englishmen's Rights, which you mentioned in your first epistle; hope you will send them speedily.

We are, Fellow Citizens,

Yours sincerely,

The Bristol Society for Constitutional
Information, &c.

*At a General Meeting of the Delegates of the United Societies at
Norwich, held 24th Feb. 1794;*

It was unanimously resolved, "That one or more Delegates shall
"be sent to the next General Convention, soon as called for by our
"London Correspondents."

Copy of a Letter from the Bristol Constitutional Society to the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society.

Fellow Citizen,

Bristol, 24th April 1794.

You may be sensible, from our last communication, that in the infancy of our patriotic efforts we had many difficulties to overcome, and many strong prejudices to combat. We laid open to you our real situation; we told you our determination to address the Public; and assured you of our unalterable perseverance in the glorious cause of freedom. This perseverance, however, and these exertions of an individual Society, can but little avail, if the Societies in the different parts of the kingdom are in themselves disunited, or do not aid and assist each other, agreeable to the principles of philanthropy and *fraternity* which they so warmly profess. Under this idea, we conceive ourselves treated with a degree of *incivism*, by your Society

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not answering our last letters; the reasons may be good. At present we are candid enough to confess, that the circumstance does not appear to us in the most favourable point of view. Our Address, of which we send you a few copies, we find to have a good effect, and is likely to beget us the assistance of many friends, while our enemies acknowledge there is something very fair and reasonable in the production. This is an absolute victory; and we have reason to congratulate ourselves on the prospect of success it opens to us. With a mixture of pain and pleasure, we saw an account of your last General Meeting; we lament that the *strong hand of despotism* should so often interfere to prevent the assertion of the rights of the people, while we rejoice in your manly Constitutional perseverance, and *applaud and approve your resolution of forming another General Convention*: Our *increasing numbers* give us every reasonable hope of soon being able more *effectually to co-operate with you*; while, for the reasons formerly stated, we cannot yet make a positive promise on that head. We hope for an immediate answer. Favour us with your opinion of our address, and transmit a sketch of your plan respecting the General Convention.

By order of the Committee of Delegates appointed by the Bristol Constitutional Society.

Copy of a Letter from Newcastle to the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society.

Newcastle upon Tyne, 24th April 1794.

By desire of a number of friends to a radical Reform in the Constitution here, I make free to trouble you. We live in a place where an Aristocrat magistracy endeavours to stop the genial and benign spirit of national liberty from spreading, notwithstanding a very great number are found here that dare assert the natural and unalienable rights of Man, and bear their testimony against the tyrannical encroachments of assumed power on those rights; a good number have formed themselves into Societies, and meet weekly, admitting none but known friends; and have assumed no name but that of Newspaper Companies; these were in great spirits while the British Convention continued to act: But after their suppression a damp was cast on the whole.—Subscriptions were ready to be sent off the very night they were suppressed, and the Gazetteer stopped, which has since been remitted to London, for the use of the persecuted worthies, Muir and Palmer.—Being charmed with your masterly and bold approbation of the conduct of your Delegates and noble Martyrs for truth, Margaret and Gerald, and find your name signed Secretary to the Corresponding Society, we wish to copy your example; and beg, if you think us worth your notice, give us your views and intentions as soon as convenient, which, I hope, will be a means to stimulate and increase our numbers. Lest this should not come to you, as I have an uncertain direction, I forbear troubling you more at present, in hopes

of being favoured with your future correspondence.—Farewell, hoping the hydra of tyranny and imposition shall soon fall under the guillotine of truth and reason.

Your's, with all due respect, &c.

Copy of a Letter from the Constitutional Society at Norwich to the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society.

Citizen ***,

Norwich Societies, 29th April 1794.

It is with great satisfaction we view the manly conduct of you and your colleagues, especially when, surrounded as you are, by a domineering Aristocracy, who, notwithstanding their great bluster, are but chicken-hearted;—Witness our Norfolk Quixotes, who, after being completely foiled at the County Meeting, were determined to subscribe to support an armed Aristocracy: But, pray, tell it not in the metropolis, that a noble Marquis subscribed no more than £200, and another high-pensioned Lord but £100; an Alderman and leader, and very fierce for Church and King, the enormous sum of £20: These are the men who are ready to spend their lives and fortunes;—but enough of such privileged beings! We should be glad to know whether the Friends of the People consent to a Convention, and whether they will take an active part.

Please to accept of a few of our bills. We should esteem it a favour that you would send us a few of your late declarations.

P. S. Many of our friends are fully convinced of the necessity, legality, and rationality of a Convention: But, Query, Whether the time be expedient?

Copy of a Letter from the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society to Newcastle.

Citizen,

1st May 1794.

It is with pleasure the London Corresponding Society hear that a Society on a similar plan, and with the same patriotic objects in view, is likely to be established at Newcastle upon Tyne.—If ever a crisis arrived that required the exertions of the people to stop the torrent of corruption, infamy, and despotism, that seems likely to overwhelm them, it is the present—in God's name then, let us use these exertions.—We are called upon by every thing that is dear to us, as men and as christians. The cause of truth and liberty must finally be omnipotent; therefore doubt not that the glorious reign of liberty and equality will ere long be established, and modern governments, with every appendage of wickedness and corruption, will flee in time from their genial influence, as beasts of prey to their dens of rapine and darkness from the rising sun. The London Corresponding Society have beheld with indignation the rapid advances of despotism in Britain, and are ready cordially to unite with every other Society in the three kingdoms, who have for their object a full and effectual Representation of the People.

ple; they therefore have deputed six of their Members to meet six Members of the Society for Constitutional Information, to form a Committee of Correspondence and Co-operation; this Committee meets regularly twice a week at No. 2, Beaufort-Buildings, Strand, where any Member delegated by your Society will meet with every information required.—We inclose you a few of our resolutions, entered into at our General Meeting on the 14th of April, which will be sufficiently explanatory of our sentiments and views. *We heartily unite with you in wishing that the hydra of tyranny and imposition may soon fall under the guillotine of truth and reason.*

Copy of a Letter from the Secretary to the Constitutional Society at Sheffield, to the Secretary of the London Corresponding Society.

Friend and Fellow Citizen, Sheffield, May 11th, 1794.

The Friends of Peace and Reform in Halifax having held a General Public Meeting in the open air, on Monday, April 21st, 1794, at which were many friends from Leeds, Wakefield, Huddersfield, Bradford, and the adjacent neighbourhood, the Friends of Freedom, after the meeting, agreed to hold a General Meeting of Delegates at Bristol, in order to consider on the measures to be adopted by them preparatory to a *General Convention*. After which our worthy friend, Citizen ——— of Halifax, being ordered to Sheffield to get the proceedings of the Meeting printed, and consult with us upon the subject, they were advised by us to defer at present the meeting of Delegates, *until further information from you on that subject*. I was therefore ordered, at our last Committee Meeting, to write to you, requesting the favour of as early intelligence as possible on that important business. We are not in the least intimidated in Sheffield, as we can call and hold a Public Meeting whenever circumstances render the same necessary; besides, in the house where I reside, we have a large commodious room, where the Society can peaceably meet in rotation.

By order of the Committee,

**** Secretary.

SUPPLEMENT

TO THE

SECOND REPORT

OF

The COMMITTEE of SECRECY of *the*
HOUSE of COMMONS.

SINCE the Second Report of the Committee was presented to the House, a letter has been received by the Chairman of the Committee from Mr. Grey, a Member of this House, and one of the Members of the Society of the Friends of the People, on the subject of the correspondence between that Society and the Scotch Convention.

From one of the enclosures transmitted by Mr. Grey, it appears that the letters of the Secretary of the Friends of the People, dated the 23d July and 29th October, which are referred to in the Second Report, were written without any authority from the Society, or from any Committee of the Society, and are considered by him as only private and personal communications from himself: Although this circumstance did not distinctly appear on the face of the letters, there is nothing in the manner in which they are referred to by your Committee inconsistent with it; and although your Committee, on examining these papers, find nothing in their former statement erroneous; yet, being desirous of putting the House fully in possession of all the additional information which they have received on this subject, they have thought that the most satisfactory way of doing so, is to subjoin the papers communicated by Mr. Grey, without any comment on the observations and reasoning therein contained.

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APPENDIX.

APPENDIX, No. 1.

S I R,

Chapel Street, June 14th.

UPON seeing, in the Second Report of the Secret Committee, the Society of the Friends of the People introduced as acting in concert and correspondence with the Scotch Convention, I thought it necessary to make immediate enquiry of the Secretary, as to the circumstances of any communication that might have passed between them.—The result of that enquiry, which I desired him to state to me by letter, I have now the honour of inclosing to you, in order that you may have an opportunity, if you think it material to do so, of correcting what appears to me to be an erroneous statement in the Report of the Committee. I have also inclosed a printed copy of the proceedings of the Scotch Convention, previous to the time of the only communication ever made by them to the Friends of the People, in December 1792, that it may be seen to what the vote of thanks, inserted in the Report, really referred.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient humble Servant,

C. GREY.

The Rt. honble. Wm. Pitt.

APPENDIX, No. 2.

Fifth Street, Soho; Wednesday evening, June 11th, 1794.

S I R,

IN compliance with your desire of being accurately informed what correspondence the Friends of the People in London have had with the Convention in Scotland, or with Mr. Skirving, its Secretary, I send you the following particulars, which contain not only the substance of the communications with the Society, but also of those I have personally made, and of the whole subject, as far as it has come within my knowledge.

The first Convention at Edinburgh, in favour of Parliamentary Reform, consisted exclusively of delegates from the different Societies of the Friends of the People in Scotland. By their minutes they

they appear to have declined communicating with any Society which did not take that title. They first met on the 11th of December 1792, and sat only three days. Their name of "*Convention*" was familiar to meetings in Scotland; and they stated the object of their institution to have been to consolidate the common strength of the Friends of Reform in that part of the country; which is the very same reason given for the establishment of a similar body, for a similar purpose, in London, in 1780.

In their last sitting, on the 13th of December, they voted that certain resolutions should be sent to the Friends of the People in London; which, together with the letter inclosing them, I herewith transmit. This was the only communication made from that body. The answer to it stated, that by some accident the resolutions mentioned in the letter were not inclosed; but that the Society had seen them in the newspapers: It also assured them of the approbation and concurrence of the Friends of the People in London, according to the terms of their several declarations. I afterwards received printed copies of its proceedings, in December 1792 and May 1793, and could not perceive any thing in them that was not strictly confined to a reasonable Parliamentary Reform.

On the 2d of May 1793, after having sat three days, it adjourned till October. Many gentlemen of great respectability and of large property were members of it. The Magistrates of Edinburgh did not molest, or, as far as ever I could learn, even blame it. And when, in the House of Commons, the question of Parliamentary Reform was so fully discussed, on the 6th and 7th of May 1793, in which the subject of a National Convention was introduced and reprobated, the slightest notice was not taken of the Convention at Edinburgh, though it had assembled in the preceding December and published its proceedings, and had again assembled, seven days before that debate, for the purpose of collecting and forwarding many of the very petitions in favour of Reform, which were then under discussion;—a business which it publicly avowed, and which many days prior to the debate was published in the London newspapers.

The next letter received from Mr. Skirving, so far as I recollect, was in the middle of October 1793; it was signed by him, as Secretary to the Society of the Friends of the People in Edinburgh, and not as Secretary to the Convention. It solicited the Society of the Friends of the People in London to send delegates to the ensuing Convention of the Friends of the People at Edinburgh, appointed for the 29th of the same month. I shewed the letter to two or three members who happened to be then in town, and they agreed with me that I ought to send an answer to the following effect:—Acquainting Mr. Skirving that on a subject so important as that of sending delegates to the Convention at Edinburgh, it would be necessary to consult the Society; but that the shortness of the time rendered it impossible to give proper notice, first for calling the Committee (which was not then sitting, and which alone could assemble the Society), and then for calling a general meeting; the shortness of the time I represented as the more objectionable in that

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that season of the year, when very few Members were in town. I, however, told him that I had consulted some Members on the subject, and they had agreed with me, without deciding on the propriety of the measure, that the notice was insufficient, and that therefore his request could not be complied with. I added, that it was highly probable some Members of the Society, then in Scotland, would be present, and that whatever they agreed to I had no doubt the Society would confirm. I said Lord Lauderdale might perhaps attend. No person in London saw this answer after it was drawn up. It was entirely of my own writing; and I think it was stated in it that it was merely a private personal communication from myself.

I afterwards understood that the Convention of Delegates from the Friends of the People in Scotland assembled accordingly on the 29th of October, and sat, as they had done at their former meetings, two or three days. They confined themselves strictly, and I believe sincerely, to the business of Parliamentary Reform, and then adjourned for several months. Soon after their adjournment, however, the Delegates from the Societies in London and other parts of England arrived. The Convention then re-assembled on the 19th of November; and it was not till after this period that it assumed the name of the British Convention instituted for the Purpose of obtaining Universal Suffrage and Annual Parliaments, or adopted any part of the language or conduct which (with what justice I do not pretend to determine) have exposed it to so much animadversion and censure.

This is the whole of the correspondence, as far as I can recollect, that passed between the Friends of the People in London and the Convention, or Mr. Skirving, at Edinburgh. The correspondence that took place between Mr. Skirving and myself could not, from circumstances which occur in my mind, be very important. He sent me the printed minutes of the Convention, and I sent him the publications of the Friends of the People in London. The last time I wrote to him was about the end of October, acknowledging the receipt of some copies of Mr. Muir's Trial; and I perfectly remember concluding my letter with a hope that the Delegates from the Societies in London, who had then just departed to meet the Convention in Edinburgh, would not import into Scotland any of that intemperate spirit which had brought blame on the moderate and sincere friends of Reform in England: I hoped that the Friends of the People in Scotland would continue to persevere with that prudence and moderation in the cause of Parliamentary Reform, which had so justly obtained them the approbation of the friends to the measure in England. This letter, I suppose, displeased Mr. Skirving, for he never after wrote to me, nor did I write to him.

Having now detailed the whole of the correspondence, to be best of my remembrance, between the Convention and the Friends of the People in London, and between Mr. Skirving, and myself, I think it my duty to observe, without presuming to give any opinion

on the conduct of the British Convention, that a material distinction ought to be drawn between it and the Convention of the Friends of the People. The proceedings of the latter, at their meetings in December 1792, and May 1793, appear to me to have been such as the most timid friend to Parliamentary Reform could not object to. Their proceedings at their meeting in October were, I believe, of the same description. When they assembled with the Delegates from England, indeed, another system seems to have been pursued. Their meetings had always sat only three days at a time, and they were settled to be held only twice a year. But after it became the British Convention, they then, and not till then, entered into all those measures at which the magistrates and government have expressed so much alarm; and it was not till then that they even declared decisively in favour of Universal Suffrage and Annual Parliaments; it is therefore extremely material to remark, that no blame has yet been thrown on the Convention of the Friends of the People at Edinburgh; and that between the *British* Convention and the Friends of the People in London no correspondence of any kind ever took place, nor even any sort of communication between Mr. Skirving and myself after its institution.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most humble obedient servant,

DANIEL STUART.

To Charles Grey, Esq. M. P.

P. S. Since writing the above, I have seen the Second Report of the Secret Committee of the House of Commons, in which mention is made of two letters that had escaped my memory. The first of those letters, containing a resolution of thanks, I never made any minute of, because those thanks were not voted to the Scotch Convention in particular, as might be imagined from the statement in the Report, but were passed generally to all Societies which had assisted in the cause of Parliamentary Reform.—After the motion in the House of Commons, on the 6th of May 1793, the Society of the Friends of the People in London, on the 18th of the same month, agreed to the following resolution: “That the thanks of this Society be returned to the various Societies in correspondence with
“ it, for their zeal and activity in the cause of Parliamentary Reform; and to express a hope and wish that they will proceed with
“ the same spirit, industry, and temper, during the interval between
“ the present time and the meeting of the next session of Parliament.”—Besides sending copies of this resolution to the different Societies in England, it was resolved that copies of it should be sent to the chairmen of the Societies in Edinburgh and Glasgow, requesting them to transmit the same to all the Societies in Scotland with which they corresponded. The Convention at Edinburgh was considered, by me, not only as a Society with which the Friends of the People in London communicated, but as the best channel for conveying the resolution of thanks over Scotland; and I of course sent them

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them a copy. But I do not find, nor do I believe, that I was instructed to address the resolution to the Convention, in preference to the Edinburgh Society of Friends of the People.

With regard to the second letter mentioned in the Report, dated the 23d of July 1793, I do not, in the slightest degree, remember it; but from the passage there quoted I have not the least doubt of its being mine: It contains the language I have invariably held whenever the subject of a Convention has been mentioned. But it is impossible I at that time could have written as *Secretary*, either in the name of the Society, which was not then sitting, it having adjourned on the 4th of June 1793, without again meeting till the 23d of January 1794; or in the name of the Committee, which did not meet from the 30th of April 1793, till the 17th of January 1794: And as neither the Society nor the Committee ever authorized me to correspond in their name, without their knowledge, the letter of the 23d of July must have been a private and personal one of my own. I find that on the 20th of that month I received a parcel of the printed minutes of the Convention, accompanied by a letter from Mr. Skirving, in his own name only, and not in the name of any Society, in which I suppose he took that opportunity of wishing to know my opinion respecting a Convention in England. Of such private personal letters I have written many, but as I did not consider them to concern the Society, I never kept copies of them. I am, however, certain, that if they were all published, none of them, or even any parts of them, could with justice be censured.

The third letter mentioned in the Report is of the same private personal nature with the second; I think I wrote it in haste, and I remember it the more particularly, as it was the last I sent to Mr. Skirving. I am very certain that when it is published in the Appendix, it will fully justify the account I have already given of it in the body of this letter.

Thursday, 4 o'clock.

APPENDIX, No. 3.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to inform the Friends of the People in London, that the General Convention of Delegates from the various Societies of the Friends of the People throughout Scotland, unanimously agreed on Thursday last, the third day of their sitting in this place, to address the Friends of the People in London, and the inclosed letter of address was accordingly ordered to be printed and transmitted.

I have taken upon me to direct the same to you, upon seeing your name at their resolutions, by this day's post; and to entreat you to communicate it at their first meeting.

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I will transmit all the proceedings of the Convention so soon as the various minutes and resolutions are received from the press.

Edinburgh, 19th Dec.
179.

With great esteem,
I am, Sir,
Your most obedient humble Servant,
W. SKIRVING, Secretary.

Samuel Whitbread, Junior, Esq.
M. P. London.

APPENDIX, No. 4.

Edinburgh, December 12th.

A^T a General Convention of the Delegates of the Friends of the People, held this day,

Colonel Dalrymple in the chair,

Resolved,

That it appears to this Convention that very great abuses have arisen in the government of this country, from a neglect of the genuine principles of the Constitution; that these abuses have of late grown to an alarming height, and produced great discontents.

Resolved, That the essential measures to be pursued, in order to remove these abuses, and effectually to do away their mischievous consequences, are,

1st, To restore the freedom of election, and an equal representation of the People in Parliament.

2d, To secure to the People a frequent exercise of their right of electing their representatives.

Resolved, That for the purpose of accomplishing these constitutional objects, the proper and legal method is that of applying by petition to Parliament.

Resolved, That since a speedy and complete redress of our present grievances will most effectually be obtained by the joint co-operation of every Briton who yet retains the spirit and the wish to be free, this Convention will, as far as their principles and objects allow them, co-operate with the Society of the Friends of the People in London.

Resolved, That this resolution, along with those voted at a former Convention, be transmitted by the Chairman to the Society of the Friends of the People in London.

(Signed) WILLIAM DALRYMPLE, Chairman.
WILLIAM SKIRVING, Secretary.

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APPENDIX, No. 5.

The Minutes of the Proceedings of the General Convention of the Delegates from the Societies of the Friends of the People throughout Scotland. At their several Sitzings in Edinburgh, on the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth of December, 1792.—Edinburgh: Printed by J. Robertson, No. 39, South Bridge. Anno 1793.

Baxter's Hall, Edin. Tuesday, Dec. 11, 1792.

AT noon, this day, the Delegates from the several Societies of the Friends of the People, throughout Scotland, assembled very numerously in their Convention-room here, in compliance with the following public advertisements.

SIR,

THE Convention of Delegates from the various Societies of THE FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE, in and about Edinburgh, who assembled here upon the twenty-first instant, expressed an unanimous wish for a General Convention of Delegates, from the various Societies in Scotland, established upon similar principles.

If it shall meet the approbation of the majority of the Societies, they propose to hold a Convention, upon the eleventh day of December next, in the city of Edinburgh.

The various advantages which will result to the whole, from a consolidation of our common strength, are too obvious to be detailed. If you approve of this measure, and resolve to send delegates, inform us, in course of post. It shall be our care to prepare a proper place for meeting, of which we shall give you timely and regular notice. Be pleased to direct your letters to our Secretary, Mr. William Skirving, Head of the Horse wynd, Edinburgh.

By order of the Committee of Convention.

W. SKIRVING, Sec'y.

EDINBURGH, }
Nov. 23, 1792. }

P. S. We earnestly request of your Society, to communicate this intimation to any Societies in your neighbourhood, of whose existence, in consequence of their not having published their declaration of principles, we may be ignorant.

A Convention of delegates from every Society of Friends of the People in Scotland, will be held at Edinburgh, in Baxter's Hall, in James's Court, on Tuesday the eleventh of December next, at twelve o'clock noon, against which time the General Committee shall have every thing prepared for the reception of the delegates.

After a short conversation, Messrs. Bell, Muir, and Skirving, the present President, Vice-President, and Secretary, of the Edinburgh General Association of the Friends of the People, were requested to officiate in these several capacities, until the powers of the delegates should be verified.

Mr. HUGH BELL in the Chair.

The commissions to the several delegates were produced, and read. The roll being made up, was called over, name by name, and intimation several times made, that if the name of any delegate had been omitted, it should now be given in. The Convention was then declared assembled; and the President, Vice president, and Secretary retired.

General Convention assembled.

Some conversation took place relative to office-bearers and committees, and the impropriety of having these permanent. The Convention at length, on the motion of Lord Daer, resolved, that they would elect a President each day, or sitting; and, upon a motion by Thomas Muir, younger, Esq. of Hunterhill, it was resolved, that the Secretary should be permanent.

Lieut. Col. Dalrymple of Fordel was then unanimously called to the chair; and W. Skirving of Strathruddy elected Secretary.

Col. DALRYMPLE in the Chair.

After some motions relating to order, moved by Lord Daer and Mr. Fowler, and ordered to be laid upon the table in writing, the Convention proceeded to a declaration of principles; and a scroll of resolutions being presented by John Morthland, Esq. Advocate, the Convention, upon his motion, resolved itself into a Committee, to consider the same, and to report against to-morrow's sitting.

Refused the Convention.

Col. DALRYMPLE in the Chair.

Mr. Muir moved, That the two motions made by Capt. Johnston, resolved and published by the General Association of the Friends of the People, in and about Edinburgh, be also adopted, and published, as the resolutions of the General Convention. The same was agreed to unanimously, and a copy, drawn up in proper form, was ordered to be laid before the Convention to-morrow. A motion was made to adjourn till six o'clock in the evening; but, as this was opposed, it was agreed to adjourn till ten o'clock next forenoon.

Convention Room, Wednesday, 10 o'clock.

The delegates assembled conform to the adjournment. Lord Daer moved, That the President of the former day take the chair till the meeting was full, and that then they should elect their president for the day, agreeable to their former resolution; and the same was adopted.

Col. DALRYMPLE in the Chair.

Lord Daer, as ordered yesterday, gave in to the table, the following motions:

1. That it shall *not* be a rule, that when a motion is made and seconded, it shall be decided upon before any other be heard.
2. That when a subject is announced as the business for consideration, it shall be permitted to any person to propose what motions thereon he shall think it is proper should be adopted; and that when all the motions are laid on the table which any wish to propose,

a vote

a vote shall be put, which proposal shall be first taken into consideration.

3. That when any business is under consideration, any incidental motion may be introduced; and if the meeting chuse not to take it into consideration at that moment, the meeting shall declare this, by resolving to *pass on to the ordinary course of business*.

4. That any motion may be discussed the day it is proposed; but that it shall not be finally decided or published to the world, till it be confirmed next day.

The meeting being now full, Lord Daer was unanimously called to the chair.

Lord DAER in the Chair.

Mr. Muir rose, to read a printed paper, which had been sent from Ireland, intitled, Address of the United Irishmen in Dublin, to the Delegates for Reform in Scotland; the reading of it was opposed in point of form, the same not being before the House; but the Address being declared a masterly performance, and a declaration that afforded the most flattering evidence of the union and philanthropy of the Friends of Reform in Ireland, the reading of it was universally called for. After reading the same, the Convention passed to the order of the day.

Lord Daer being obliged to leave the meeting, the last Preses was called to the chair as a matter of course.

Col. DALRYMPLE in the Chair.

The Report of the Committee was called for, the resolutions adopted in Committee were read, and debated paragraph by paragraph, when the following were, with great unanimity, resolved in Convention, and ordered to be published.

Resolved, That this Convention, taking under consideration the insidious, wicked, and inflammatory artifices, employed by the enemies of all reform, to misrepresent and calumniate the Friends of the People, as the promoters of public discord, and advocates for an unjust and absurd violation of private property, by an equal division—think it incumbent upon them to declare, that they hold all such unprincipled designs in utter detestation and abhorrence, and that they will maintain the established constitution of Great-Britain, on its genuine acknowledged principles, consisting of three estates—King, Lords, and Commons.

Resolved, That the members of this Convention will, to the utmost of their power, concur in aiding and strengthening the hands of the civil magistrates throughout this kingdom, to repress riot and tumult, and all attempts whatsoever to disturb the tranquillity, happiness, and good order of society.

Resolved, That it appears to this Convention, that very great abuses have arisen in the government of this country, from a neglect of the genuine principles of the constitution; that these abuses have of late grown to an alarming height, and produced great discontents.

Resolved, That the essential measures to be pursued, in order to remove these abuses, and effectually to do away their mischievous consequences, are,

First,

First, To restore the freedom of election, and an equal representation of the people in Parliament. And,

Secondly, To secure to the people a frequent exercise of their right of electing their representatives.

Resolved, That, for the purpose of accomplishing these constitutional objects, the proper and legal method is, that of applying by petition to Parliament.

Resolved, That these Resolutions be printed in the Scots and English newspapers; and also be printed in hand-bills, for general distribution among the Associated Friends of the People, in different parts of Scotland.

Adjourned till six o'clock in the evening.

Convention Hall, Wednesday, 6 o'clock.

Col. DALRYMPLE in the Chair.

The Secretary presented the plan of organization for individual societies, for district associations, and for general conventions; together with a written motion by Mr. Fowler, for a committee of publications, for the purpose of communicating instruction. The same were received; and Messrs. Wilson and Fowler were requested to bring them before the House at a proper opportunity.

Mr. Muir and others brought forward the following motions, which were unanimously adopted; namely,

Resolved, That this Convention do address the Friends of the People at London.

Resolved, That the thanks of the Convention be returned to Messrs. Grey, Erskine, the Earl of Lauderdale, the Marquis of Lansdowne, Col. M'Leod, Lord Daer, and Col. Dalrymple, for their patriotic services in the cause of the People: To J. H. Tooke, Esq. for his masterly support of freedom: To the Hon. Major Maitland, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Muir, Mr. Bell, and Captain Johnston, for their important assistance to overturn corruption; also to the Right Hon. Charles Fox, for his determined speech in the last meeting of the Whig Club; and lastly to all those members of the House of Commons, who have supported in Parliament the cause of the People.

Agreed to Captain Johnston's two resolutions of yesterday, which are as follow:

Resolved, That it be recommended to each Society of the Friends of the People, to expunge from the roll of their members, the name or names of any individual or individuals, who may have acted illegally, tumultuously, or in any way to the disturbance of the public peace.

Resolved, That any individual or individuals, of the Societies of the Friends of the People, whose conduct may have been legal and orderly, and who may be persecuted by the arm of power, for adhering to the cause of the people, be defended by the united strength of the Friends of the People.

The five following motions which Mr. Skirving proposed, were ordered to lie on the table:

I. That

I. That the Friends of the People in Britain should unite in the application to Parliament, both as to the extent of reform to be demanded, and as to the manner of executing their petition for the same.

II. That therefore this Convention should send two or three deputies to London, to concert a common plan with the Friends of the People there, advising always with the General Committees at Edinburgh, Glasgow, &c.

III. That these Committees, while the deputies remain at London, should meet weekly, in order to instruct the deputies from time to time.

IV. That when a common plan of operation is thus procured, a General Convention be called, to approve or amend the same, and particularly to direct the manner in which the petitions shall be executed and presented to Parliament.

V. That the Convention recommend, That the Friends of the Constitution and of the People be in the mean time diligent, in forming themselves every where into societies, in order to give the greater energy to their petitions.

Mr. Allan proposed the following to be added to the resolutions already adopted :

That, in order to supersede the necessity of constantly resorting to the aid of a military force, it be recommended by the Convention, to the associated Friends of the People, in the different parts of the country, to hold themselves in readiness to support the civil magistrate, when required, for the suppression of any popular tumults that may arise in their neighbourhood.

This motion was deferred, on account of its importance; till next day.

Mr. Muir moved, to appoint a Committee of Finance; and the following regulations were unanimously adopted; namely,

Resolved, That each District Association shall have a committee for regulating their own respective finances—That the several Committees of Finance shall correspond with the Edinburgh Committee of Finance, as the Committee also of Finance for the General Convention, and remit to this Committee, as such, their respective contributions for the public interest.

Resolved, That this Committee of General Finance, in Edinburgh, shall lay before each Convention, a state of the receipt and expenditure.

Resolved, That the Convention, on the first day of their sitting, appoint a Committee of Constraint, for the purpose of inspecting the accounts of the Convention's Committee of Finance; and report the result of their examination to the Convention.

A motion that had been formerly made verbally, and adopted in the resolutions, to petition Parliament, was resumed; and the Convention resolved to petition Parliament with all convenient speed; and a Committee was appointed to draw up a schedule of said petition, and to present the same to-morrow.

Adjourned, till ten o'clock to-morrow.

Convention Hall, Thursday, 10 o'clock.

The delegates convened conform to adjournment ; Colonel Dalrymple in the chair.

Mr. Morthland moved, to have the two following resolutions added to the former ones :

Resolved, That since a speedy and complete redress of our present grievances will be most effectually obtained by the joint co-operation of every Briton, who yet retains the spirit and the wish to be free, this Convention will, as far as their principles and objects will allow them, co-operate with the Society of the Friends of the People in London.

Resolved, That this resolution, along with those voted at a former sitting of this Convention, (page 193 and 194,) be transmitted, by the Chairman, to the Society of the Friends of the People in London.

And the same was ordered accordingly.

Mr. Fowler read the copy of the petition to Parliament which had been ordered ; and it met with general approbation, as to the matter of it ; and was remitted back to the Committee, to be put into the form appointed by the House of Commons, and thereafter transmitted to the different Societies for approbation.

Mr. Wilson then brought forward the Plan of Organization, for the different bodies of the Friends of the People ; after reading over the whole of it, the Convention recognized the right of individual Societies, to regulate their own internal order, and resolved, That these words be inserted, " with power to any ten towns, in which there is a Society of the Friends of the People, to call a General Convention *."

Mr. Morthland next brought forward the following motion, proposed by Mr. Ritchie of Edinburgh :

Moved, That the Secretary to this Convention transmit to the Secretary of Burghesses associated for the purpose of obtaining a Reform in the internal Government of the Royal Burghs of Scotland, a letter inclosing the resolutions, containing the declaration of principles drawn up and published by this Convention, and recommending to the Burghesses, if the above declaration of principles meets their approbation, to co-operate with the Friends of the People, in the common cause of obtaining the great objects of reform expressed in these resolutions.

In place of this motion, the following was submitted by Mr. Skirving, and seconded by Captain Johnston and others :

Moved, That if any members of the Association for Borough Reform apply to the Friends of the People to be admitted, they will be received cordially. But the Convention can admit no Societies, but Societies of the Friends of the People.

After a long debate, the votes were taken, and the first motion was negatived, and the second adopted.

* The Plan of Organization to be revised and published by the Edinburgh Association.

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Upon the motion of Dr. Yule, an address to the citizens of Britain at large, was unanimously resolved, and a committee appointed to draw up the same.

The following motion, submitted by Mr. Ellis, was likewise unanimously resolved :

That it be recommended to the people, to form associations in every county, composed of members from the different Societies in that county, in order to ascertain the state of population, the number of electors, the quantity of taxes paid, the partial taxes, and the local grievances of that county. That they publish the same, or transmit them to the Committee of Finance at Edinburgh.

Mr. Fowler then moved, " That the thanks of the Convention be returned to Convener Lindsay of Coltbridge, and the other friends of liberty, who, in a liberal and manly manner, refuted the aspersions thrown on the conduct and intentions of the FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE, in the late meeting of the fourteen Incorporated Trades of Edinburgh ;" the same was unanimously agreed to, and the Convention expressed their sense of the benefit which was done to the cause by the patriotic conduct of that meeting at large.

Captain JOHNSTON in the Chair.

Resumed the consideration of Mr. Allan's motion of yesterday ; when sundry members thinking that it was expressed substantially in the second general resolution, (page 193,) now printed, Mr. Allan agreed to withdraw it.

It was then resolved, that the thanks of the Convention be given to the Secretary, Mr. Skirving, for his unremitting application to the business of the Society ; and that a small Committee be appointed to assist him in extending, and publishing the proceedings of this Convention.

John Millar, Esq. Advocate, called the attention of the Convention, to certain resolutions in the Edinburgh Herald of the day, of which the following is a copy :

" We whose names are hereunto subscribed, being unanimously and decidedly of opinion, That for the security and happiness of all classes of our fellow-countrymen, for the maintenance of our own rights and liberties, and for those of our posterity, it is, in the present moment, incumbent upon us, and all good subjects, to give to the executive government an effectual support in counteracting the efforts of sedition, and in suppressing, in their beginnings, all tumults or riots, on whatever pretence they may be excited ; do hereby publicly declare our determination to take all such steps for these purposes as are within the limits of our duty in the several stations in which the Constitution of our country has placed us, and to afford, by our individual exertions, that active assistance to the authority of the lawful Magistrate, and to the maintenance of the established government, which is at all times due from the subjects of this free and happy kingdom ; but which we feel to be more peculiarly necessary at a time when insidious attempts have been made to deceive and mislead the unwary.

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" With these sentiments, and to this intent, we are

" RESOLVED, AND DO DECLARE

" That we will stand by the Constitution with our lives and fortunes.

" That we will jointly and individually use our utmost endeavours to counteract all seditious attempts, and, in particular, all associations for the publication or dispersion of seditious and inflammatory writings, or tending to excite disorders and tumults within this part of the kingdom.

" That we will, on every occasion, exert ourselves on the first appearance of tumult or disorder, to maintain the public peace, and to act in support of the civil authority for suppressing all riots and tumults that may be excited.

" And whereas we are of opinion, that it would greatly conduce to the maintenance of peace and good order, that means should be used to give such just and proper information to our fellow-subjects as may tend to remove the false and delusive opinions that have been industriously circulated amongst them, and to impress on their minds a proper sense of the invaluable blessings secured to this nation by our happy Constitution: We have agreed diligently to promote the circulation of such writings as may contribute to this important end."

Having read these resolutions, he moved, that the Convention do approve of the same, and in testimony of such approbation, that the President and Secretary, with as many of the delegates as still remain in town, shall subscribe the paper now lying in Goldsmiths' Hall.

Mr. Morthland seconded the motion.

Some delegates, particularly Mr. Christie of Laurencekirk, doubted the propriety of the motion. Notwithstanding of which it was resolved, that the delegates, in parties of eight or ten at a time, should go down and subscribe the same; adding to their names, Friend of the People, or Delegate, &c.

Upon the President and a few more withdrawing for that purpose, Mr. John Clark, Architect, was called to the chair, when, after some conversation, the meeting was adjourned till six o'clock in the evening.

The delegates having once more assembled conform to adjournment, Mr. Bisset from Dundee was unanimously called to the chair.

Mr. BISSET in the Chair.

The Convention resolved, That a great number of their resolutions and minutes be printed, and sent to all the Societies, and committed the same to the direction of the Committee of Finance at Edinburgh; and Mr. Muir moved, That the Secretary be enjoined to give sufficient notice to the Edinburgh Committee of Finance, that they were likewise appointed the Committee of Finance for the General Convention; and upon the Secretary's motion, the following instructions, drawn up by Mr. Muir, were unanimously recommended to their observation.

To the Committee of Finances of the Edinburgh Convention.

"The General Convention has instructed each particular Society, to form a Committee of Finance, for managing their own private and public contributions. The Convention has requested you to take the management of the expences which their sittings here may have incurred. In this department of their business, they consider you as their committee. The particular Societies will transmit to you their respective proportions of the general expence. The first General Convention has left each particular Society to the freedom of their own will, in regard to the different assessments they may lay upon their members."

"You will keep a regular account of the public expenditure and outlay, which you will lay before each General Convention for their examination."

"As soon as you have collected the amount of the general expence, inform each particular Society by a circular letter, in order that the Societies may, without delay, transmit to you their respective proportions."

A respectable member informed the Convention, that a Society had been just now formed upon the principles of the Friends of the People, whose members, in general, were gentlemen of landed property to a very considerable extent.

Mr. Morthland moved, That the thanks of the Convention be returned to Mr. Fowler, for his eminent services in the business of the Convention; and the same were given unanimously.

It was then moved by Mr. Drummond, to thank the country delegates, for their ardent zeal in the cause, manifested by coming up so numerously at this inclement season, and for their disinterested conduct during the sitting; and this was done with heart-felt satisfaction.

Mr. Bisset in the chair, begged leave to move the return of thanks from the country delegates, to those in the town and neighbourhood, for the care and attention to the cause which they had manifested, in assembling so opportunely and properly a Convention of the Societies of the FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE. And to this the country delegates heartily consented.

The President then addressed the delegates, exhorting them to persevere in the great and good cause in which they had embarked, until their object should be completely attained.

The warm approbation with which the Convention received this sentiment, sufficiently expressed their concurrence in it, and their firm determination to persevere.

Adjourned.

W. SKIRVING, *Secretary.*

FIRST REPORT

FROM

The COMMITTEE of SECRECY appointed by the HOUSE of LORDS

To inspect the Report and Original Papers, and the Book sealed up in a Bag, delivered on Monday the 19th of May last, by a Message from the Commons; and who, by the Order of the House of Wednesday the 21st of the same Month, were empowered to send for Persons, Papers, and Records, and to receive such Communication as may be made to them by his Majesty's Orders, or by the Committee of Secrecy appointed by the House of Commons, and to report thereupon, from time to time, as they shall see cause.

By the Lords Committees appointed a Committee to inspect the Report and Original Papers, and the Book sealed up in a Bag, delivered on Monday the 19th of May last by a Message from the Commons.

ORDERED TO REPORT.

THAT the Committee have met, and having carefully compared the said Report with the original papers referred to them, have come to an unanimous resolution immediately to report to your Lordships, that they are satisfied and convinced, by the evidence contained in these papers, that a traitorous conspiracy hath been formed, and acts done in pursuance thereof, by certain Societies and persons in different parts of the kingdom, for the subversion of the established laws and constitution, and the introduction of that system of anarchy and confusion which has fatally prevailed in France.

The same evidence contains strong indications that measures have been recently taken, and are still continuing, for providing arms of the most pernicious sort to be distributed amongst the favourers •
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this conspiracy, for effectuating, by open force, the purposes for which they have conspired. The Committee have therefore thought it their duty to continue the further examination of the matters referred to them, and to submit to the consideration of the House, whether it may not be proper that they should be empowered to send for persons and papers, and to receive such communications as may be made to them by his Majesty's orders, or by the Committee of Secrecy appointed by the House of Commons; whose vigilance and activity in providing for the public safety, cannot fail to excite a proportionable zeal and emulation in your Lordships for detecting this scene of iniquity, and thereby averting the calamities in which the further progress of such a conspiracy might have involved the nation.

SECOND REPORT

FROM

*The COMMITTEE of SECRECY of the
HOUSE of LORDS.*

By the Lords Committees appointed a Committee to inspect the Report and Original Papers, and the Book sealed up in a Bag, delivered on Monday the 19th of May last by a Message from the Commons.

ORDERED TO REPORT.

THAT your Committee has proceeded in the farther examination of the books and papers referred to them; and, in pursuance of the powers given to them by the House, have also taken under their consideration the depositions and examinations of several persons, papers found in the custody of those who have been apprehended, and intelligence communicated to them by one of his Majesty's Secretaries of State.

After a diligent investigation of all those sources of information, the conclusions they had formerly stated to the House, and the facts and propositions contained in the Report of the Secret Committee of the House of Commons referred to them, appear to be incontrovertibly established. The extent and danger of the extravagant and fatal designs entertained by a number of disaffected persons, and the rapid progress lately made in the measures taken to carry such designs into execution, are illustrated and made manifest in a satisfactory manner as circumstantial evidence can admit.

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The first object to which the attention of your Committee hath been directed, was the preparation of arms referred to in their First Report, of which they were then only authorised to say, that strong indications had appeared. The evidence which they have since examined, as well as subsequent discoveries providentially made, have brought that important part of the case more fully to light.

But in order to place that object in its just point of view, and to illustrate its connexion with other parts of the general conspiracy for the destruction of the constitution, it has appeared to your Committee that it would be fit to state, in the first place, the circumstances which preceded that preparation of arms, and those under which it took place.

From authentic and public documents it appears, that, subsequent to the imprisonment of the late French King, the abolition of monarchy, and the establishment of a democratical and revolutionary government, in France, a direct and avowed correspondence was carried on between the Convention in France and certain persons in his Majesty's dominions, for the undisguised purpose of an union of principles and conduct.

The addresses sent to the French Convention in the month of November 1792, and the answers returned to them, are matters of public notoriety. The Committee, referring to the statement given of them by the Report of the Secret Committee of the House of Commons, have further to observe upon these addresses, that it now appears that the idea was first conceived after the massacres at Paris, in the beginning of September 1792, was drawn into form after the invasion of the Netherlands, and that it was not the sudden act of a few individuals, or even of one particular Society, but was long under deliberation, communicated to other Societies in different parts of the kingdom assembled under various names, and the common pretext of Parliamentary reform adopted by many, and finally transmitted as a declaration of the sentiments of a majority of the English nation.

The Committee has bestowed a particular attention to investigate the proceedings of that Society which assumed the name of the London Corresponding Society; because, from the character, habits, and condition, of those who compose it, compared with the style and language, as well as the method and contrivance discovered in their proceedings, it is most probable that it must have been guided by persons of a superior education, and more cultivated talents, than appear amongst the members of this Society. For the direct and avowed connexion which took place in the beginning of April last between this Society and the Society for Constitutional Information, and the plan of co-operation then established between them, the Committee again refer to the Report of the Secret Committee of the House of Commons now before the House.

The London Corresponding Society, in the first formation, which was about January 1792, appears to have been planned and directed by leading Members of the Society for Constitutional Information, and in the course of its subsequent proceedings, the measures they pursued were in many instances privately concerted with persons of the

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the same description. The number of persons first assembled did not exceed two hundred. In the course of a few months, their communications with similar Societies in various places became very frequent, and they began to assume a form and method of proceeding by sub-divisions and delegations, which gave to them an appearance of consequence, and of increasing numbers. They were the ostensible promoters of the address to the French Convention, presented in November 1792, and the instruments to carry on the correspondence upon it in the country; from whence they have taken every occasion to extend their communication with these other Societies, which they have industriously drawn to a close, intimate, and dependent connexion.

The war, commenced against his Majesty by the persons exercising the powers of government in France, suppressed the open communication with the French Convention; but neither that circumstance, nor the repeated declaration of Parliament, had any effect to restrain the avowal of those doctrines which had led that Convention to all those excesses which have proved so destructive in France to the principles of social order, of religion, and of morality.

In the course of the year 1793, a plan appears to have been conceived, and in some degree brought into a regular shape, for uniting the different meetings, formed by the artful dissemination of seditious publications, inviting men to follow the example of France, into such a body as might be brought to act to one given object, and be subject to one general direction.

The most marked effect of this plan was the assembling of a body under the name of a Convention; which made its first public appearance at Edinburgh on the 29th of October 1793.

The design of this meeting had been known and concerted for some time with Societies in England, particularly with the Society for Constitutional Information, and the London Corresponding Society. Two Delegates to this meeting were chosen, and sent from the London Corresponding Society; a regular allowance for their journey and expences, at a rate very considerable in respect to the apparent funds of that Society, was voted for their support, and actually paid: These delegates were Margarot and Gerald. They appeared, by the sequel, to have been, in effect, not only delegates, but conductors of the affairs of the intended meeting; and deriving a considerable consequence from the supposed representation of the Society which sent them, and other Societies in England, from which they afterwards produced commissions. Two delegates were also chosen from the Society for Constitutional Information—Sinclair, and a person known under the name of Yorke.

After sitting four days in expectation of the English delegates, the meeting, which had consisted of about 150 persons from different parts of Scotland, separated, because the English delegates had not arrived. In two days afterwards they came; a delegate from Sheffield also arrived; and Sinclair, one of the delegates from the Society for Constitutional Information: Mr. Hamilton Rowan and Mr.

Mr. Simon Butler, stating themselves to come on the part of a Society called the United Irishmen, but having no commission, make their appearance likewise, and were all introduced to a General Committee of the Convention, and received as delegates.

A meeting of the Convention, which had separated before the appearance of these persons, was immediately summoned by Skirving the Secretary, and by public advertisement, for the 19th of November, on which day it was held, and consisted of about 160 persons.

The first four days of their meeting were employed in settling forms, and in an examination of the commissions of the delegates supposed to be given by meetings of the inhabitants of the places from which they were dated, but which meetings were in very few places known to have existed, or to have been called for any such purpose. All these commissions were of course allowed to be valid. On the 22d day of November, this meeting voted itself to be The British Convention, and assumed that style in their minutes and other proceedings, which were dated "in the first year of the British Convention," and in some instances, "in the first year of the "British Convention *One and Indivisible*."

The meeting thus formed, proceeded to act in exact imitation of the French Convention, adopting all its forms, phrases, and modes of proceeding, forming Committees of Organization, of Instruction, of Finance, of Secrecy, decreeing honours of the sitting, honourable mention of services, and what may merit more serious attention than the affectation of this style, attempting to institute Primary Societies, Provincial Assemblies, and Departments in the country. On the 28th of November, they came to a resolution of declared opposition and resistance to the authority of Parliament, under a reserve that it should not be entered on the minutes till the close of their sittings.

After this, the spirit and activity of the magistrates were exerted to disperse this Convention; and on the 5th of December 1793, the ringleaders were apprehended, their papers seized, and some of them have since been tried and convicted of the crimes laid to their charge.

Notwithstanding the just and laudable exertions of the civil authority to suppress this enormous disorder, the mischief intended has been in part effectuated, for there has existed a meeting formed on the model of the French Convention, assuming the name of the British Convention, which, from the 19th of November to the 5th of December 1793, has been exhibited in this kingdom, with an open publication of all its transactions, in a newspaper conducted by one of its members, to serve as a pattern of the form and method in which a future Convention might proceed to act.

It also appears from the sequel, that there still remained a Committee of Secrecy and Emergency formed in that meeting, which has continued to conduct subsequent operations in Scotland.

The Committee have thought it important to call the attention of the House to this transaction, because it appears, by the evidence produced to them, to have been concerted at least, if not directed,

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directed, by the disaffected Societies in England, and to have a most intimate connexion with the sequel of the conspiracy carried on here.

From the time of the meeting and dispersion of the Convention at Edinburgh, the Societies in England began to act with increased vigour and activity. Their resolutions expressed a warm approbation of the proceedings of the Convention at Edinburgh; strong declarations were made in behalf of those who had been brought to trial and convicted; subscriptions entered into for their encouragement and support; and some projects appear to have been entertained for their rescue.

The London Corresponding Society had continued to extend its correspondence, and also its influence with the other Societies dispersed in the country, and had, in the month of February last, adopted a resolution to arrange the members into divisions of thirty, composed of those who lived nearest to each other, that they might easily be assembled together upon any emergency. They had also procured about that time a plan of a constitution to be formed, which was printed and circulated amongst the several divisions, by some of which it had been approved, and at the time when the Secretary was apprehended, was about to be referred to the General Meeting of Delegates for its final sanction. By this plan, besides the Section of Thirty, classed so as to be ready to come forth at the same time, there were to be secondary Sections of ten each, under the representation and direction of a tythingman. There was also a General Committee of Correspondence.

This Committee, in fact, appears to have existed for a considerable time, to have consisted of a number not exceeding five, to have transacted and directed all the secret business of the Society, and they were authorised to communicate to the larger meetings only such matters as they thought advisable.

It seems almost unnecessary for the Committee to point out to the observation of the House, that a Society (whatever be the condition of the individuals who compose it) so organized, the phrase they adopt in their printed plan, and so connected with other Societies in various parts of the island, is capable of giving the immediate effect of an united operation to whatever measures may be proposed by their leaders, especially when the recent example of France affords so striking an instance of the destructive effect of such a combination. The Committee must at the same time remark, that this constitution (as it is called) in the declaration of principles by which it is introduced, the tests required of the members, and the general frame of the provisions, evidently show that the model on which it is formed is that which has led to the annihilation of all regular government in France, and to the despotism of a few demagogues through the power and influence of the clubs.

Under this state of things, and when all this arrangement had been previously formed, the project of procuring arms was brought forward. The precise date when it took place cannot be ascertained, for it appears to have been conducted in most places with peculiar secrecy and caution.

So early as the time of the meeting at Edinburgh, the facility of procuring arms, particularly pikes, the use and efficacy of them as it had been proved in France, had been discussed at some of the division meetings; but no specific measure to this effect had been taken till a much later period.

About the month of March 1794, private meetings had been held twice a week, in various places of and adjoining to the metropolis, for the purpose of instructing men in the use of the firelock; the places of such meeting were changed to avoid detection; and were chosen by a committee. They exercised chiefly by night; and no persons were admitted but by a printed ticket, with the inscription, 'Liberty to those who dare to be free.' The number of firelocks actually provided, as far as it has been discovered, may seem inconsiderable for the execution of any design, although, for the purpose of teaching the exercise, it had a most dangerous extent; but in respect of the circumstances of the persons who purchased, or subscribed for the purchase, the number is an object of some consideration; and it appears that the Artillery House, and gunsmith shops in various parts of the metropolis, were looked to as furnishing a ready resource upon occasion, and as the means of providing an abundant supply of arms to persons already instructed in the use of them.

The Committee has stated the number, so far as already discovered, to be inconsiderable; but they must add, that after they supposed their inquiry to be closed, a recent discovery communicated to them has added largely to the number.

The use of pikes formed a still more considerable part of the intended armament. The effect of this weapon had often been discussed at meetings, and a correspondence had been entered into with persons at Sheffield for providing a supply of them. The price for the iron-work was fixed so low as a shilling; and if the cost exceeded that amount (which it appears it must have done), the overplus was to be paid by a person at Sheffield, who was to be reimbursed by the Society. In pursuance of this plan, letters, dated the 24th of April, were sent from Sheffield to the Corresponding Society; and, under their cover, to another Society at Norwich, advertising them that the pikes were in a forward state of preparation, and fixing the terms on which they were to be delivered.

The Committee think it proper to subjoin a hand-bill, printed in April for the London Corresponding Society, and distributed at a meeting:

"Countrymen, you are told by those who are in office that you are in danger of a French invasion; you are told by those who are out of office that you are in danger of a Hessian or Hanoverian invasion: In either case arms will be of use to you. Agree among yourselves. Get arms, and learn the use of them."

At Sheffield, the measure of arming with pikes, after the example of the French, was more openly pursued: It had been recommended in April last, in public harangues, by a person whose name often occurs in the course of this conspiracy, but who has not yet been apprehended, to great numbers of people, as well as by handbills distributed, exciting them to arm. The pikes were made under the orders of that person, who particularly directed the form and size of them. Several persons were employed in the manufacture, which was making a considerable progress, before the alarm given by the apprehension of the Secretaries of the two Societies in London. Besides the pikes, another sort of instrument was produced at Sheffield, the use of which was (as explained) to be thrown about in the night on the road, for laming the men and the horses who might be employed to quell any commotions.

In the progress of the examinations into this conspiracy, an accidental discovery was made in Scotland, which has more fully explained the extent of the danger, and the ample range of the whole design.

From the nature of the proceedings carried on in Scotland, in consequence of that discovery, it was impossible for the Committee to examine particularly into the evidence of it; they have therefore transmitted to the House the information communicated to them on this head, in the form in which they have received it, and added it in an Appendix to the Report. All the observations they are authorised to make upon it is, that the evidence which they have examined clearly proves, 1st, A decided purpose of forming another British Convention in such central place as should be afterwards communicated. 2d, Measures concerted, and in part actually taken, for assembling that Convention. 3d, A preparation of arms to oppose and withstand any attempt to disperse such a meeting. 4th, A continued connexion and correspondence between those Societies in England, by whose co-operation these measures were to be executed, and the leading members of the former British Convention, which actually held its meetings at Edinburgh in November 1793.

Upon the subject of the preparation of arms, the Committee have been forced to enter into more detail than was consistent with the general plan of their Report in respect to the other parts of the case, which was to state the general result, and not the particular circumstances.

On the most deliberate consideration of all the evidence before them, it appears to the Committee, that there are the most convincing proofs, not only of a plan formed in theory, to procure, by legal means, some partial change of the laws by which this kingdom has been happily governed, but of a formed conspiracy to assemble, under the name of a Convention, a number of persons assuming to be the representatives of the nation, for the express purpose of making their resolutions to be law, and of subverting, by their authority, the whole frame of the Government, and the

constitution of this realm, its Monarchy, its Parliament, and its fundamental laws.

That, to effectuate the purpose of this conspiracy, measures had been actually taken for an arrangement and distribution of the persons seduced to engage in it, a concert and communication established between different bodies of men in different parts of the country, to assemble at some certain time and place, by some secret concert and direction, consultations held of the acts to be done for the furtherance of this conspiracy of the most traitorous import, and arms prepared and preparing for supporting, by force, the sudden execution of these daring and desperate designs, the success of which, if they could have succeeded, must have produced the total subversion of the constitution, with the destruction of his Majesty's person, family, and government, and the annihilation of our laws and liberties, and the mere attempt of which, though we may justly conclude, that by the loyalty of the kingdom it must have been defeated, would have involved this country in all the horrors of insurrection, from the calamities of which we have now, by the Divine Providence, been happily exempted.

The Committee must farther observe, that there is also as strong a degree of evidence as the nature of the case will admit, that the aim of the leaders in this conspiracy extended to as complete a revolution in this country, as that which has taken place in France since the month of August 1792.

Their adoption of the principles and opinions of the French Convention; their incessant exertions to propagate the same doctrines here; their attachment to the interests of the French revolutionary government; their persuasion that there was an intimate connexion between the cause they meant to serve and the success of the French, and even their hope of deriving assistance from the French arms; appear not by loose talk, but by the deliberate and advised discourses held at their meetings, by the written correspondence of some of the most active members, and by the communications between the different Societies; emissaries also have been sent by them among his Majesty's troops, and papers circulated in the vain hope of seducing them from their loyalty; and projects of the most desperate and flagitious nature, respecting the Members of both Houses of Parliament, and even the safety of his Majesty's most sacred person and of his royal family, have not merely been uttered, but entertained and discussed amongst them.

The ostensible object of the several meetings whose members were to be the followers in this conspiracy, namely, parliamentary reform, is a pretext that could impose on none but the most credulous, ignorant, and unwary: The only reform they ever professed was, the establishment of universal suffrage, and annual representation; these they had assumed and declared to be theirs by inherent and unalienable right; a right not to be relinquished but with their lives, and which none but thieves and traitors could wish to withhold from them.

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The assembling a Convention was evidently not for consulting upon the fitness of the measure, but to be itself the means of obtaining it; and they had previously disclaimed, in the most express terms, the only legal means of obtaining any change of the existing laws by an application to the legislature, declaring that they must depend only on their own strength and courage, for obtaining of what they termed their rights.

The necessary result is, that the application of strength and courage must have been the object for which such an assembly was to be called, it not being the purpose of those who formed it to obtain laws from any other authority but their own; having not only in the private meetings, but public declarations, openly professed that they were to seek redress from their own laws, and not from the laws of those they termed their plunderers, enemies, and oppressors.

The accomplishment of such a purpose necessarily implies the overthrow of all subordination in the state, the abolition of the established form of Parliament, together with the destruction of hereditary monarchy, and the subversion of every safeguard which the wisdom of ages has established in this happy country for the peace and welfare of society, for the encouragement of industry, morality, and religion, for the protection of innocence, and the punishment of vice, and for the secure enjoyment of property, of liberty, and of life itself. Under the circumstances of these designs, deliberately entertained, openly avowed, and on the very point of being attempted to be executed, your Committee feel that they have executed their duty in laying before your Lordships the important result of their inquiries; and that it becomes them to leave it to the wisdom of your Lordships to consider what steps it may be proper for this House to take in order to manifest its abhorrence of this wicked conspiracy; its desire that every proper measure may be exerted in order to give energy and vigour to the execution of the laws by which the subjects of this realm are protected against these criminal purposes; and its readiness to afford to his Majesty every degree of assistance and support which is due from us as loyal and affectionate subjects, and as men deeply impressed with a sense of the value of the blessings which we enjoy.

APPENDIX

TO THE

SECOND REPORT.

No. 1.

Letter from the Right Honourable Mr. Secretary Dundas to the Lord Privy Seal, dated Whitehall, May 19th, 1794, inclosing Four Drafts of Pikes, or Spear Heads.

My Lord,

Whitehall, May 19th, 1794.

I HAVE received this morning from the Sheriff Depute of the county of Edinburgh, authentic information of an accidental discovery, made on the 15th and 16th ult.; the general report of which I feel it proper to state to you, as it seems materially connected with the inquiry in which the Secret Committee of the House of Lords is now engaged.

The creditors of a bankrupt having received information that part of his goods had been embezzled, and were secreted in the house of an individual, the usual warrant was issued, authorising a search to be made in the suspected place; and, in carrying it into execution on the afternoon of the 15th, the officers discovered in a private place, where they appeared to have been concealed, twelve pike or spear heads of the construction and dimensions in the inclosed draught. The proprietor of the house, who happened to be from home at the time, was soon thereafter taken into custody; and, on being carried before the proper magistrate for examination, refused to give any account of these weapons, to whom they belonged, or for what purposes they were intended. On a more narrow search, there was likewise discovered in a private and concealed part of the house, two other pike or spear heads, similar to the others; two battle axes, of the form and dimensions delineated in the inclosed paper; and a shaft or pole with a screw on the end, fitted for receiving either the spear head, or battle axe.

Immediate inquiry being made after the persons with whom this individual had lately been seen in company, and two blacksmiths being mentioned among them, their houses and shops were immediately searched; one of the two was also taken into custody, the other escaped and absconded. In the shop of the first of these men were found four pike or spear heads finished, fitted with screws and sockets, and ready to be fixed on shafts; eight battle axes, also fitted

fitted and finished; and twenty blades more not quite finished, but nearly so.

In the shop and dwelling-house of the other who had absconded, no such weapons were found; but the apprentices, on being examined before a magistrate, acknowledged that the pike or spear heads first discovered had been privately manufactured in their master's shop during the course of this fortnight past, and carried privately to his house as soon as completed.

The battle axes and blades appear also to have been manufactured within this fortnight past; and were intended, as the maker of them said, for the purpose of arming the people should an invasion take place; but it appears that to his apprentices, whom he had employed in assisting him to make them, he pretended they were meant for a gate: An account obviously false, as he could not point out any gate for which these weapons were intended; nor name any person who had ordered him to frame a gate of so particular a construction.

These circumstances have induced the magistrates to commit all the persons concerned for examination; and the result of the inquiries which are at present carrying forward I expect will be regularly communicated to me. It is proper also to inform your Lordship that all the persons chiefly concerned appear to have been Members of the British Convention, which met at Edinburgh last winter, and, since the dispersion of it, have continued the most active and leading persons in the Societies whose Delegates composed the principal part of that meeting; who appear at present taking measures for calling another Convention of the same nature, which they expected is to take place soon in England; and some of whom have acknowledged, that the propriety of the individuals composing these Societies arming themselves with spears and pikes has, within these few weeks past, been the subject of conversation amongst them, and steps taken for carrying that purpose into execution with caution and secrecy.

The silence of one of the persons, the inconsistent and contradictory account of the other, and the flight of the third, throw a very strong suspicion on the purposes and intentions of the parties concerned in this transaction. The Sheriff is in the course of his duty proceeding to investigate the matter more accurately: But I consider it necessary and proper to communicate, through your Lordship to the Committee, information so intimately connected with the object of its inquiries, however imperfect that information still is; but which I have no doubt will soon be completed.

I am,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient

Humble Servant,

HENRY DUNDAS.

The Most Noble
the Marquis of Stafford.

No. 2.

Letter from the Right Honourable Mr. Secretary Dundas to the Lord Privy Seal, dated Whitehall, May 23d, 1794, inclosing Copy of a printed Paper, dated Dundee, 12th April 1794.

My Lord,

Whitehall, 23d May 1794.

I HAVE received this morning farther accounts from the Sheriff Depute of Edinburgh of the transaction stated in my last letter; and the result of the inquiries since made by that magistrate, and which are still going forward, appear to me of such a nature as to deserve the particular attention of the Secret Committee.

One of the individuals mentioned in my former letter has since made a disclosure; and a person since taken into custody, and who appears to have been privy to the whole transaction, has confessed that these weapons were the first of a very large number and quantity actually ordered to be made, and intended to be privately dispersed among the members of the various Societies throughout Scotland, styling themselves Friends of the People, and who appear to be at present employed in taking measures for calling together another British Convention of Delegates to be held in England. An order has been given from one town alone in Scotland for a large quantity of weapons of the nature described; no less a number than four thousand has been mentioned, and more are intended to be distributed in Edinburgh. Emissaries appear also to have been dispatched within this fortnight or three weeks past to the manufacturing towns in the West of Scotland, for the purpose of founding the inclinations of such of the inhabitants there who are known to be members of these Societies; and there is reason to believe, from information received from various different quarters, that these persons have by no means been unsuccessful.

Paisley is in particular alluded to as being in a state of great readiness; and there has been positive information received through other channels, that within these three weeks, persons of that description have assembled themselves to a very considerable number in the night-time for the purpose of practising the use of arms. The particulars of this information, and the extent to which these meetings have proceeded, are at present matter of inquiry with the proper magistrates of the place, but the result has not yet been received.

The formation of this plan is now traced home to certain persons, some of whom are in custody, who appear to be entrusted by these Societies in Scotland with the most unlimited powers in directing their future proceedings, carrying on their correspondence, and who act as a Committee of Secrecy, consisting of a certain number of persons the principal and most active members of the British Convention. The choosing of delegates to the expected

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Convention in England, the place of whose meeting is not yet divulged, and the raising of contributions among the various Societies throughout Scotland for defraying the charges of such delegates, appear to be the material part of their present employment, and in which it would seem they have made some progress; and it is the same Committee who have for these some weeks past been consulting and taking measures for arming themselves and the members of the various clubs with pikes and battle-axes, and who have employed the persons above-mentioned in manufacturing them. The scheme appears to have been first proposed and agreed upon about a month ago; to have been since carried on with the utmost secrecy and caution; and the weapons, so far as has yet been discovered, manufactured by such persons, in such small quantities, in such circumstances, and under such pretences, as not to render the progress of the work probably liable to suspicion or detection; and it was brought to light by the very accidental and singular incident which I mentioned in my former letter.

I have the satisfaction of observing, that the magistrates and officers of the law in Scotland have been and still continue active in the searches and inquiries making at the different suspected places within their respective jurisdictions. In Perth and Dundee nothing has been discovered which can lead me to believe, that measures have been taken in either of these places for making arms, the manufacture of which seems to have been confined to Edinburgh, and intended to have been gradually dispersed from thence to such places as required them. No such weapons have been discovered at Paisley or its neighbourhood, though the intention of arming and holding regular nightly meetings are perfectly ascertained.

Information has also been communicated, of the authenticity of which there is no room to doubt, that a conspiracy has been formed, as soon as a proper number of these weapons were distributed among the Friends of the People in Edinburgh, to seize in the night the persons of the principal magistrates and officers of the law, the banks, the public offices, guards, and prison, and after inticing the soldiery from the castle, by kindling a fire in the middle of the city, to intercept them on their return, by means of different armed parties to be properly stationed for that purpose.

It appears likewise from indisputable facts, that the most secret and artful means have been and are still using with the Fencible Regiments in Scotland to excite them to disobedience and mutiny. The printed paper which I herewith transmit, has been industriously circulated for that purpose.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient

Humble servant,

HENRY DUNDAS.

Marquis of Stafford.

Inclosed in Mr. Dundas's Letter to Lord Privy Seal, dated
May 23d, 1794.

(Copy.) *

Friends and Brethren,

IT is with the greatest pleasure that your countrymen are informed, That such is your attachment and love to them, and to your native country, that you manfully and firmly resolve not to leave it upon any terms contrary to those upon which you were first engaged. Your countrymen love you; and their hearts would be as much wounded to part with you, as yours would be to be separated from them. They well know that they are safe under the protection of their *fathers*, their *sons*, their *brothers* in arms; and they neither wish nor desire any other defenders.— They hope and believe that *your* hearts are filled with the same sentiments.

The great mass of the *people* from amongst whom you have enlisted, have been represented to you as your enemies;—believe not the assertion; they have been taught to consider *you* as foes; but they do not fear finding friends among their brethren.

Their cause and yours is the same.—They are poor, but they have honest hearts; hearts which sympathize in *your* cause: They look for the same friendship and the same sympathy in *you*. They rejoice to hear that you are becoming daily more convinced of the great truth that the *law* ought to be the same to the *Highlander* and to *Lowlander*; to the rich and to the *poor*; and that no man can be compelled to take up arms, by *any* authority whatsoever, unless *his own inclinations prompt him so to do*.

This truth has been hitherto carefully concealed from you, but it is not less certain. The will of your *laird* cannot, *without* your *own consent*, separate you from your families and friends, although many of you may have experienced the exertions of such a power, however unjust, and however contrary to law.

We respect and admire the principle which induces you (though necessity has compelled you to take up arms) still to persist in remaining to defend your friends at home; and not to quit a country which holds pledges so dear.

When *you* are gone, where is their defence?—They may be either left *without protection*, or may soon see their country over-run by *foreign troops*; such as in time past have already shed the blood of your ancestors without provocation, and without remorse; and who would feel perhaps as little compunction in shedding *theirs*.

Prepared for every deed of horror, these foreign mercenaries may violate the *chastity* of your wives, your sisters, and your daughters, and, when desire is satiated, *cruelty* may resume its place in their hearts, as experience has too well and too fatally shown; and friends, parents, children, brothers, may be involved in one common

* The words in *Italics* are in large letters in the printed copy.

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mon slaughter. The cruel massacre of Glencoe cannot yet be forgotten:---Are there not amongst you whose forefathers perished there?---Their hearts, throbbing with kindness and hospitality, were pierced with the daggers of their treacherous guests; and the feast prepared by the hand of unsuspecting friendship was closed with a scene of blood!---Such is the return for kindness and hospitality---Such the protection which your families have to expect!!!

How will they then look around in vain for *your* protecting care, when perhaps you are fighting at a distance in a foreign land?---But they hope you will not forsake them.---Stay, oh stay, and defend your families and friends!---*for that purpose alone you were enlisted*.---They are ready to come forward for *you* in the vindication of *your* rights.

Thousands join in the same sentiments with *you*, and ardently wish for your continuance amongst them. The circumstances which might require you to quit your country *have not yet taken place*.---No invasion has yet happened.---You cannot be *compelled* to go.---Leave not your country.---Assert your independence.---Your countrymen will look up to *you* as their *protectors* and *guardians*, and will in *their* turn lift up their arms to protect and assist *you*.

Dundee, April 12th, 1794.

No. 3.

Letter from the Right Honourable Mr. Secretary Dundas to the Lord Privy Seal, dated Whitehall, 24th May 1794.

My Lord,

Whitehall, 24th May 1794.

I HAVE received no further accounts of the result of the inquiries going on in Edinburgh; but I am sorry to state that I have received information from the Sheriff of the county of Renfrew, confirmed by letters received from other respectable persons in Paisley, that the magistrates of that place having, in the course of their inquiries, committed on the afternoon of the 19th a man to custody for further examination, a considerable number of persons (several hundreds) assembled in the evening, and after choosing a President, whom they addressed by the title of Citizen President, voted a number of Resolutions to the following purpose:

That a National Convention should be immediately called, to which they would send delegates.

That they should not petition Parliament, as it was to themselves alone, and to such Convention, they could look for redress.

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They then proceeded to consider the conduct of the sheriff and magistrates in committing their brother citizen, as he was termed: And after much discussion as to the propriety of immediately releasing him by force, the majority seemed inclined to take mild measures first, and to send a deputation to ask his release; but the magistrates having received information of what was intended, and dismissed the man from custody, the mob dispersed with three cheers, having been previously instructed by their President to abstain from further tumult, and to observe a peaceable and orderly conduct.

The authority of the civil magistrate is in the mean time entirely superseded, and until a proper force is sent to protect them in the future execution of their duty, which has been anxiously required by the sheriff and magistrates, they dare not proceed in the common course of legal and judicial inquiry against any of the persons who are suspected of being concerned in these violent and tumultuary proceedings. But it cannot escape the observation of the Committee, how accurately this intelligence corresponds with, and confirms the information yesterday communicated, as to the state of the minds of these people in that neighbourhood, the alarm which their leaders feel as to the result of the legal inquiries at present depending, and the regular systematic connexion between them and the leaders at Edinburgh, as discovered from the yet unfinished and hasty examinations taken in that city.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

The Most Noble
the Marquis of Stafford.

Your Lordship's most obedient
Humble servant,
HENRY DUNDAS,

No. 4.

Letter from the Right Honourable Mr. Secretary Dundas to the Lord Privy Seal, dated Whitehall, 27th May 1794.

My Lord,

Whitehall, 27th May 1794.

I HAVE this morning received farther information from Scotland, which appears to me proper to be communicated to the Committee.

The persons in whose custody the weapons formerly described were found, appear to have acted for some time past under the name of a Committee of Ways and Means appointed by the British Convention; and to have been empowered by the various Societies throughout Scotland to direct all their future proceedings, by means of emissaries privately dispatched to different parts of the country. The Committee has signified to, and prepared a number of the Societies for the approaching Convention in England; many of whom have chosen, and all, as far as is yet known, agreed

to chuse delegates to attend it, and subscribe for their expences. The time and place of meeting was not divulged; and were to be communicated from Edinburgh, in proper time, by individuals to be sent from thence for that purpose, whose arrival was daily looked for by several of the different Societies. One of the members of the late Convention at Edinburgh appears, within this fortnight past, to have been dispatched, and to have actually performed an extensive tour through the west part of Scotland; to have visited, in his progress, the towns of Queensferry, Falkirk, Stirling, St. Ninian's, Kilsyth, Kirkintuloch, Camprie, Glasgow, and Paisley; in all of which places he appears to have met with the principal persons concerned in these Societies; to have left with them and the members of the Societies copies of a circular letter from the Committee of Edinburgh, and instructed them in what manner they were in future to carry on their correspondence; and to have suggested to them the propriety of furnishing themselves with arms for the purposes of defence, under the pretence of defending themselves against foreign troops.

An attempt has been made to distribute some of the weapons lately discovered at Edinburgh, by means of persons privately dispatched to the country for that purpose, and which seems only to have failed in its execution from the timidity of the persons solicited to do so.

An individual of the same description has been taken into custody in the country, who appears to have commissioned, and actually received from England some muskets and bayonets: On being questioned by the proper magistrate, he has refused giving any explanation farther than that he commissioned them in the way of his business.—But it does not appear that he ever dealt in such articles before; no person appears to have commissioned him to procure any such, and there seems to be full evidence of his having solicited others to purchase what they of themselves were not thinking of or wishing to provide.

He admits having corresponded with the London Corresponding Society on the subject of a Convention, and that the Society, of which he is a leader, had agreed to send delegates to it as soon as the time and place of meeting should be divulged.

A requisition has been made by the magistrates and principal inhabitants of Paisley for a military force to protect them in the execution of their duty, and in their persons and properties, which has been duly attended to. It is with much satisfaction I inform your Lordship, that the gentlemen of estate and character in the county of Renfrew have voluntarily stepped forward, and determined to support the authority of the civil magistrate.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient

Humble servant,

HENRY DUNDAS.

No. 5.

Letter from the Right Honourable Mr. Secretary Dundas to the Lord Privy Seal, dated Whitehall, 2d June 1794.

My Lord,

Whitehall, 2d June 1794.

THE information I have received this morning from Edinburgh enables me to state to the Committee, that the transactions communicated in my former letters are farther cleared up by the inquiries which have since taken place in that city.

Some of the persons who absconded on the first discovery of the arms concealed in certain houses have been discovered and apprehended; and the result of these farther inquiries confirms, in almost every particular, the account received from other quarters, and the import of which I have already laid before the Committee. The establishment of a Secret Committee at Edinburgh, invested with full powers to direct the future operations of the Societies throughout Scotland; the regular correspondence privately carried on by means of emissaries dispatched to the different towns; the ascertaining the exact number of persons in these Societies, who were directed to provide themselves with arms, and to hold themselves in readiness for any measure which the Secret Committee might in due time communicate, are confirmed by every account and information which the magistrates have received: And an individual, who has been lately taken into custody, has confirmed the account received from a different quarter of the dangerous design, planned by the Edinburgh Committee, of effecting a general insurrection as soon as they were ready and prepared for carrying it into execution, by the seizure of the principal magistrates and officers of the law at midnight, and possessing themselves of the prisons and public offices, as stated to your Lordship in my letter of the 23d May, and then communicated through a different channel from that through which the present confirmation of these circumstances has been received. The plan seems not only to have been discussed and deliberated on by the ringleaders at Edinburgh, but to have proceeded a certain degree in its steps towards actual execution, which appear to have been conducted with the utmost caution; and there is reason to believe, that the execution of the plan was not to be confined to Edinburgh, but was meant to take place in some of the most considerable towns in Scotland on a certain day, and at one and the same time. The proper and usual steps have been taken for bringing the offenders to trial; and those against whom the information chiefly points, are detained in custody.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient

Humble servant,

HENRY DUNDAS.

PAPERS, ACCOUNTS, ESTIMATES, &c.

LAI'D BEFORE THE HOUSE OF COMMONS IN THE
COURSE OF THE SESSION.

THE following, relative to the state of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, were presented and laid on the table, Friday, Feb. 21.

No. 1. *Extract of a Letter from Lieutenant-Governor Wentworth to Mr. Secretary Dundas; dated Halifax, 22d March 1793.*

I am diligently taking preparatory steps for calling out the internal force of the province, whenever his Majesty's service may require it; and have no doubt seven or eight thousand good men may be assembled readily, in case that measure should become necessary.

No. 2. *Extract of a Letter from Lieutenant-Governor Wentworth to Mr. Secretary Dundas; dated Halifax, 22d March 1793.*

I am deeply penetrated with the most grateful sentiments, for the consideration his Majesty's servants have been pleased to take on my proposal for raising a provincial regiment, which I can complete in a very short time, with able men, mostly used to service, and would be a great and most useful addition of force to his Majesty's service; more particularly in cases of emergency, or inimical attempts on these provinces, wherein, from their knowledge of the country, their habits of travelling and hardship, they might be of singular utility.

No. 3. *Extract of a Letter from Lieutenant-Governor Wentworth to Mr. Secretary Dundas; dated Halifax, Nova Scotia, 2d May 1793.*

I have had the honour to receive your letter to me, dated Whitehall, 8th February 1793, signifying his Majesty's commands that I should instantly take the steps necessary to raise a corps of 600 men; and that his Majesty was most graciously pleased to allow me to be Colonel of said corps.

I most humbly intreat permission to express that I feel the highest and most dutiful sense of this mark of his Majesty's most gracious condescension and royal favour, which must animate my unceasing zeal and exertions in his Majesty's service.

In humble obedience thereto, I immediately issued orders for enlisting men, and have now eighty attested, and in the barracks in
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this town; twenty of whom being wanted by Brigadier General Ogilvie and Captain Affleck, for the expedition now proceeding under their command, offered to go on board the vessels voluntarily, but, having since procured men more used to the sea, Captain Affleck has dispensed with their services. I have not any returns from the recruiting parties in the country, but hear generally that they are very successful, inasmuch that I have the fullest hope to complete the regiment in a few months.

In obedience to his Majesty's commands, I signified to Lieutenant Colonel Robinson, and since I have had the honour to receive your letter of the 27th of February 1793, I signified to Major Barclay, his Majesty's pleasure, in his nomination to be Lieutenant Colonel of the regiment to be raised in Nova Scotia. From the former I have not received any answer, as the post is not yet arrived.

Major Barclay is highly sensible of, and humbly grateful for the honour done him in this mark of the royal favour, and is ready in every way to exert his best abilities in his Majesty's service, which he considers may be most effectually promoted by his being employed to raise a regiment of Militia Volunteers, to be commanded by respectable half-pay officers, and to be composed of men who have served under them respectively, and who, from their having farms and families, cannot enlist in the regiment now raising. This regiment to consist of ten chosen companies, two of which to be artillery, and one of horse, to be well disciplined, and ready to march to the defence of any part of the province—and more particularly to defend that part of the province which is most exposed to hostile incursions on the Bays of St. Mary's, Annapolis, and Fundy, to be paid and subsisted only when actually employed and called against an enemy, and no other expence whatever. This corps, to consist of 1,000 men, will be of the highest utility to his Majesty's service, and indeed almost essential to the safety of the province, while his Majesty's regular established regiments are withdrawn. I have therefore acceded to his request to resign his nomination, and to be employed in the militia regiment, where, I am persuaded, he can be more useful to his Majesty's service, and which will also be more convenient to his private affairs, especially as he is Speaker of the House of Assembly in this province.

Captain Howe, late of his Majesty's 104th, and Captain Aldridge, late of his Majesty's 40th regiments, applied to serve in this regiment upon half-pay only, and without claim of rank. Mr. Tonge, now Adjutant, and on leave from the 60th, has also offered his services upon the same terms. As these gentlemen are highly respectable in this province, and pre-eminently distinguished for their military accomplishments, and may be of the greatest service in forming a new-raised regiment, and no expence incurred by Government thereby, I have thought it exceedingly beneficial for the King's service to employ them in raising and disciplining the regiment, until his Majesty's pleasure is signified, upon their having commissions respectively. The Ensigns upon half-pay, resident in this

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Vol. IV

this province, are generally married, have families, are settled upon farms, and of such an advanced age, that it would be exceedingly detrimental to them to leave their respective situations, and join the Nova Scotia regiment. It will therefore be necessary for me to nominate gentlemen properly qualified, who, being free of incumbrances, will serve on half-pay, until his Majesty's pleasure is known. In the nomination to the other commissions, I shall most attentively endeavour to justify the confidence you are pleased to honour me with, both in the best possible economy, and in recommending for commissions from the sole motives of the most upright duty to his Majesty's service.

With the utmost deference I intreat your favourable recommendation for his Majesty's most gracious permission to call this "The King's Nova Scotia Regiment," an honour which the regiment will endeavour to justify by their unremitted fidelity and emulous exertions in his Majesty's service.

No. 4. *Extract of a Letter from Lieutenant-Governor Wentworth to Mr. Secretary Dundas; dated Halifax, 28th May 1793.*

This town being left with so small a garrison, and apprehensions prevailing among the inhabitants for the safety of the place, I have exerted every possible diligence to recruit the regiment, which now exceeds three hundred and thirty. Two hundred and sixty-nine of them are in this garrison, and completely fit for duty; the remainder are on recruiting parties, or on their way to join the regiment.

It has been absolutely necessary to augment the levy money, which I will use my utmost endeavours to average as low as possible; and I trust, in a short time, to have the honour to report the regiment complete, and a fine body of men, as the present numbers are.

No. 5. *Extract of a Letter from Lieutenant-Governor Wentworth to Mr. Secretary Dundas; dated Halifax, 4th June 1793.*

The militia are forming with great zeal and activity into a powerful defence for the province; the regiment belonging to this town are near 600 strong—completely armed from his Majesty's Ordnance Office; being themselves, like the other militia of the province, personally unprovided. These are two days each week embodied and trained. To them are added a company of artillery, consisting of 56 of the principal merchants and freeholders in the town, who are daily exercised in their duty; also armed from his Majesty's Ordnance Office, and are to put themselves under his Majesty's artillery officer in this garrison, in case of any invasion or other emergency. These two corps are to assemble in fifteen minutes alarm upon the Parade in this garrison, and, I am persuaded, will prove a good body of men, as many of them have served in the army, and the officers are respectable and experienced. I have taken security for return of all the arms and accoutrements issued from the Ordnance Office, whenever they may be required.

The regiment forming under Colonel James Delancy, and Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Barclay, of one thousand chosen men, most of whom have been in the army, and are commanded by officers upon half-pay, who, upon this occasion, with great loyalty and attachment to his Majesty's service, voluntarily engage in this regiment, and when armed from the Ordnance Office (there being none other in the country) they engage to defend, to their utmost power, the coasts on Saint Mary's, Annapolis, and the Bay of Fundy, and with the greatest possible speed to repair to any other part of the province that may be invaded, or whenever they receive my orders for that purpose. As most of them have horses, this corps would in the course of five days be assembled in any part of the province. The other regiments of militia are forming as fast as possible; and I have the greatest pleasure in representing, that both men and officers meet my endeavours for his Majesty's service with the greatest alacrity.

I had the honour to receive the instructions from the Master General of the Ordnance, and delivered them to the principal officer in this garrison, who has issued arms and accoutrements for his Majesty's regiment now raising under my command. There are also in store many more than will be wanted for the regiment raising in New Brunswick, and of the best quality. I have been very successful in recruiting, being now about 400 men; and have the best prospect of its being soon my duty to report the regiment complete.

Commodore George sailed the 31st May from this harbour, in his Majesty's frigate the Hussar, to keep the coasts clear of any hostile cruizers that may attempt to annoy the trade or settlements to the westward; and also to protect the transports expected from New Brunswick, with his Majesty's 6th regiment of foot, to make up a fleet with the 65th, to proceed to Barbadoes, under convoy of the Alligator, upon her arrival with Brigadier-General Ogilvie and the troops from St. Pierre's in Newfoundland, which may be about the 15th instant.

No. 6. *Extract of a Letter from Lieutenant-Governor Wentworth to Mr. Secretary Dundas; dated Halifax, 23d July 1793.*

I beg leave to represent, with the utmost respect, that on the 19th instant his Majesty's frigate the Boston appeared off this harbour to take a pilot for the American coasts; upon which Brigadier-General Ogilvie ordered the signals of alarm to be made. The King's Nova Scotia regiment were in a few minutes paraded, and the first battalion of Halifax militia assembled, completely armed, in fifteen minutes, before the Government house. It gives me great pleasure in reporting the alacrity and loyalty this militia battalion manifested upon this occasion; and I am fully persuaded they will amply justify my confidence in them, whenever his Majesty's service may call them into action. The alarm signals were suppressed before they had reached the other militia, who were all regulated to march with dispatch

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patch to whatever part of the province the signals of alarm require them; each man with a blanket, ten days provisions, and the best arms he can procure. In case of any invasion on this town, I will in twenty minutes put under the command of Brigadier-General Ogilvie 900 militia, in two hours to be reinforced with 600, being the second battalion, who reside a few miles round the town; and these as fast as possible, by the militia legion of Nova Scotia, consisting of 1,000 effective men, commanded by Colonel Barclay, and other respectable officers upon half-pay. The privates many of them having served last war, these are prepared with horses to expedite, and arrangements are taken to move instantly toward the place of alarm, and there form under their respective companies.

The company of militia artillery of this town were among the first on the Parade, completely armed, and clothed in uniform, at their own expence. They continue daily, and with unwearied diligence, to prepare themselves for usefulness with the division of royal artillery in this garrison, and may be safely relied on as an additional company of 60 men to that corps. These are composed of very respectable men, generally of extensive business and property, both in this country and in England. Among the privates are men of 1000. to 6000. per annum clear estate, who from a declared principle of loyalty, and utter abhorrence of French democratic tyranny, have voluntarily offered their services.

The remaining militia of the province are perfectly well disposed, and will defend his Majesty's government faithfully. In case of emergency 4,000 of these will join me, and in extreme urgency 2,000 more may be expected; which will make the whole militia strength 9,160 men, including officers.

No. 7. *Extract of a Letter from Lieutenant-Governor Wentworth to Mr. Secretary Dundas; dated Halifax, Nova Scotia, 27th August 1793.*

I most respectfully beg leave to present my grateful acknowledgments for the honour of your letter, dated Whitehall, 6th July 1793.—In obedience thereto, I have notified to Major Bayard his Majesty's pleasure, that Major Kearney should succeed to the Lieutenant-Colonelcy of the provincial corps raising under my command in this province, vacant by the resignation of Major Barclay; and that Major Bayard should succeed to the Majority in the said corps, vacant by the promotion of Lieutenant-Colonel Kearney. Major Bayard most dutifully conforms to his Majesty's pleasure; and it is a justice due to him, that I entreat permission to represent that, having hitherto acted as Lieutenant-Colonel of the regiment, with indefatigable zeal, attention, and liberality, I have thereby been essentially aided in raising and disciplining them into a corps that obtains the approbation of all military men who see them. The other arrangements of the regiment shall be carefully adjusted by the instructions you have been pleased to signify. As the corps has been on duty since May last, it has been indispensably necessary

to furnish the men some clothing, which (being summer) is confined to a cap, jacket, trowsers, and shirt, shoes, buckles, and stock. These will serve for nearly five months, and be much cheaper to Government than the full clothing, had they arrived in time; the accounts whereof, and the other accounts of the regiment, are completing to the 24th of August, to be transmitted by the next packet.

I have prevailed on Brigadier-General Ogilvie to issue some cannon, small arms, and ammunition for the defence of Shelburne, Liverpool, Lunenburg, and Windsor, and hope I shall be as successful in behalf of Beaver Harbour, Country Harbour, and Manchester, where there are considerable fisheries, and the two last promising settlements, more especially as they solicit but a moderate supply.

The greater part of the French armament mentioned in my dispatch (No. 25) soon after that date arrived at New York and Boston; and from continually repeated informations from the United States were making preparations for a descent (as there believed) on this harbour; and if successful, afterward upon Newfoundland. It therefore became necessary to repair the defences; and that the Brigadier-General might make the most useful dispositions, I informed him of the strength and local situation of the whole militia, and the times in which they could be assembled. He has accordingly given orders to the first and second battalions of Halifax, and the artillery company, and the men are enrolled to their different batteries and posts; from the first battalion he has been furnished with able men in companies, to the number of 550 men, under proper officers, to repair and mount the batteries, in which they have so vigorously exerted themselves, that all are finished for the present, and the corps dismissed to-day.

No. 8. *Extract of a Letter from Major-General Ogilvie to Mr. Secretary Dundas, dated Halifax, 8th Oct. 1793.*

I am to represent that the garrison of this place consists, at present, only of a weak company of artillery, and one hundred effective men of the King's own regiment: That the provincial corps raised by Lieutenant-Governor Wentworth, far from being complete, at this time wants nearly two hundred men upon their returns.

In consequence of the strong naval force of the enemy, which has been for some time upon the American coast, I took early precautions for putting this harbour in such a state of defence as our strength would admit of, by repairing some of the batteries, and erecting a new one (in the room of two others), which has been executed with the strictest economy; and I have reason to trust we shall be able to repel a considerable sea force. Every assistance has been afforded to carry these measures into effect, and for manning the batteries, by Commodore George and Commissioner Duncan; and Lieutenant-Governor Wentworth gave the necessary directions for

for assembling the militia on an emergency; those of the town of Halifax assisted with great alacrity in repairing the several batteries. — From the state of the works on the Citadel Hill, and the other posts, it would have been impracticable to have repaired them, so as to be tenable against a land force, from which we have little danger to apprehend, until an enemy can be in possession of the harbour; we have guarded therefore against any attempt the French fleet may be led to make.

I reported, from time to time, to the Commander in Chief at Quebec, the steps I had taken in fortifying the harbour.

No. 9. *Extract of a Letter from Lieutenant-Governor Wentworth to Mr. Secretary Dundas, dated Halifax, Nova Scotia, 10th October 1793.*

I beg leave most respectfully to represent, that by informations lately received from his Majesty's Consul at Philadelphia, directed to Commodore George, and communicated to me; and also from various other information and concurrent circumstances, there is the greatest reason to apprehend an hostile descent on this place to be the immediate object of the French armament now ready for sea at New York. Mr. Genet, since the escape of Mr. Galbaud, has succeeded in re-uniting their force for an enterprise; their merchant vessels are laid up, and the men put on board the ships of war; many transient men have also joined them, and Mr. Hamilton, his Majesty's Consul in Virginia, writes they have 2000 regular troops.

I immediately consulted with Brigadier-General Ogilvie and Commissioner Duncan, who are both fully of opinion that the expedition is meditated against Halifax; and it was also our opinion that the present garrison, and the two battalions of militia in the town and its immediate vicinity, were not adequate to the defence of the town and harbour against such a force as was collected, and may be expected to attack. Brigadier-General Ogilvie was therefore desirous of a reinforcement from the militia, which I communicated to his Majesty's Council, and by their advice I have issued orders for 1000 men to be marched from the regiments of Hantz, King's County, and Annapolis, into Halifax, with all possible dispatch. Brigadier-General Ogilvie will afford all the barrack room that is unoccupied; nearly four hundred can be lodged in the place I had prepared for the French prisoners from Saint Pierre, which I had the honour to report in a former letter.

The service will be determined within a month of this date, and the militia dismissed, that the expence will not be great, although the measure will, in all probability, be the means of saving this town, and possibly the province, from depredation: With this addition to the garrison which I have taken, in order to be timely reinforced, should there be occasion, I trust the security of this place may be fairly relied on.

Every

Every possible preparation for defence is made at Shelburne, Liverpool, and Lunenburg; proper batteries have been erected by the militia in each harbour at their own cost; and Brigadier-General Ogilvie, at my request, has issued ordnance, arms, and ammunition from his Majesty's stores to each of them. Care has also been taken for removal of property into inaccessible places in the woods, and for the secure retreat of the inhabitants, should the superior force of the enemy subdue their defences, and make a retreat necessary, which I am persuaded will not be resorted to without a determined and spirited resistance.

The militia of Annapolis County have offered to build a redoubt on the old works of the fort at their own expence, and to defend that part of the country themselves, being aided with some cannon, arms, and ammunition, which I shall request Brigadier-General Ogilvie to issue from his Majesty's stores, as soon as I can procure and fit the armed vessel directed for his Majesty's service to carry them round.

Commodore George is cruising on the coasts to protect them and the trade from predatory insults, and to convoy a large malt ship from New Brunswick to this place, for a farther convoy to England.

No. 10. *Extract of a letter from Lieutenant-Governor Wentworth to Mr. Secretary Dundas; dated Halifax, Nova Scotia, 9th Nov. 1793.*

The Nova Scotia provincieal regiment gladly and cheerfully do the far greatest part of the duty of this garrison, and are now in an excellent state of order and discipline.

The clothing and accoutrements are arrived in good order, and, except some little part of the white cloth, every thing is of excellent quality. I cannot sufficiently express the animated gratitude of the whole regiment for his Majesty's most gracious favour, in granting the colours to the regiment, which we will endeavour to preserve by unceasing exertion, fidelity, and zeal, in his Majesty's service.

In my letter, No. 28, I had the honour to represent, that orders had been issued for embodying a reinforcement of militia, for the defence of this garrison against a French Republican armament, then preparing at New York for an enterprise against this town, Newfoundland, and the British trade navigating in and near the Gulph of St. Lawrence. About a thousand and fifty effectives, exclusive of officers, marched into town with all possible speed and alacrity. Perhaps a finer body of athletic, healthy, young men, were never assembled in any country, nor men more determined to do their duty. They performed their march with great celerity. Captain Willett's company, of Colonel Barclay's legion, part of whom were on duty at Annapolis the preceding day, and had marched home sixteen miles, marched to Halifax, one hundred and thirty.

thirty-five miles, in thirty-five hours travelling. Every division, as they arrived, were completely armed from the King's stores, on my requisition to Brigadier-General Ogilvie, who also with great readiness issued to them every accommodation of barracks and necessaries, that were unoccupied by the troops in the garrison. The men immediately applied themselves to military exercises, and, being every man used to arms, acquired great expertness in the most essential parts of their duty.

Captains Desbrisay and Rogers inform me, that those selected for the artillery discovered the most uncommon readiness at the great guns, and that they would be perfectly satisfied with their aid, that I think the artillery would have had sufficient strength, and have been well served.

It is a very pleasing part of my duty, on this occasion, to represent the loyal and spirited conduct of the militia, who instantly obeyed their orders to march, both men and officers of every description; nor were they less commendable for their regularity and good order on their march, and during their stay in town; not one single complaint having been made, or offence known among them.

It is particularly incumbent on me to mention the usual assistance I derived from the disinterested zeal, diligence, and abilities of Colonel Barclay, Adjutant-General of the militia, who came to town, and conducted the business with perfect propriety, but declined taking the pay to which he was entitled, as did also Colonel Van Corlandt, of the second battalion of King's County Militia, and Lieut. Col. Howe, of the Legion, who, at the request of Commodore George, had the command of the militia at the Eastern battery, where part of the officers and men of the Hussar were stationed.

Colonel Bryner, of the Hants militia, also exerted himself exceedingly in expediting the quota from his regiment, and in regulating the service; he liberally gave all his pay, &c. to clothe such men of his regiment as were most in want, and by every other means set an excellent example of attachment and zeal to his Majesty's service.

The Acadians sent seventy-five able young men, some of them marched near two hundred miles, decidedly faithful to the King's service, and particularly happy in being incorporated with the English.

During the expectation of a descent, the Indians assembled in small parties, and alarmed some defenceless settlers; whereupon I directed Mr. Monk to such measures as secured usefulness from some, and subjection from all of them, greatly to the comfort of the dispersed cottagers.

The French expedition having been delayed, by various difficulties in fitting out, longer than M. Genet expected, in which time he found out that there were four thousand men in Halifax, and many strong batteries erected, determined that their force was inadequate

adequate to attack this place, and embraced some other object, for which the fleet sailed on the 9th of October.

That no unnecessary expence might be incurred, I dismissed the militia, with the advice of Brigadier-General Ogilvie, Commodore George, and Commissioner Duncan, and his Majesty's Council, as soon as I obtained information that the enemy had given over their object here, and were so far from our coasts, that they could not rationally return at this season of the year.

The last division marched out of town yesterday.

No. 11. *Copy of a Letter from Lieut. Governor Wentworth to Mr. Secretary Dundas; dated Halifax, Nova Scotia, 23d Jan. 1794.*

Sir,

I most respectfully beg leave to acknowledge the honour of your letter, No. 12, dated 31st October 1793; and in obedience to his Majesty's commands therein signified, I am recruiting for the two additional companies to which Captains Howe and Aldridge are appointed, agreeably to the permission you have been pleased to grant me; for which, both those gentlemen unite with me in the highest sentiments of thankfulness and respect.

I think I may with great confidence represent, not only in behalf of these two gentlemen, but of the whole regiment, that although they may be intended for the more immediate defence of this province, they will cheerfully meet any duty his Majesty's service may require in any other of his Majesty's North American provinces. And I have every reason to expect the regiment will soon be complete, and unanimously animated with an earnest desire of being useful to his Majesty's service, to which they are faithfully devoted.

Major Bayard, of the Royal Nova Scotia regiment, requests me to report his respectful solicitations for his Majesty's leave to retire upon half-pay; which if it should be his Majesty's most gracious pleasure to grant, it is my duty humbly to recommend Major George Henry Monk, now on the half-pay of the late regiment of Nova Scotia volunteers, who is perfectly qualified conformable to my instructions, and is a gentleman of great professional merit, as well as general respectability and influence, invariably applied to the support of his Majesty's Government.

I have the honour to be, with perfect deference,

Sir,

Your most dutiful and

Obedient humble servant,

(Signed)

J. WENTWORTH.

Right Hon. Henry Dundas,
One of his Majesty's principal
Secretaries of State.

No.

No. 12. STATE of the Effective Force at Halifax, in Nova Scotia, during the Year 1793; War Office, 28 February 1794. As also a Return of the Effective Officers, Non-commissioned Officers, and Gunners, of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, present at Halifax.

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No. 12. STATE of the Effective Force at Halifax, in Nova Scotia, during the Year 1793; War Office, 28 February 1794. As also a Return of the Effective Officers, Non-commissioned Officers, and Gunners, of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, present at Halifax during the Year 1793; Woolwich, 27 February 1794.

STATE of the Effective Forces at HALIFAX, in Nova Scotia, during the Year 1793.

War Office, Feb. 28, 1794.

Dates of Returns.	CORPS.		Lieut. Colonel.	Major.	Captains.	Lieutenants.	2d Lieutenants and Ensigns.	Adjutants.	Quarter Masters.	Surgeons.	Matcs.	Serjants.	Drummers and Fifers.	Rank and File.
1 January	Detachm. of Artillery,	4th and 21st regiments	1	1	8	11	8	—	1	3	—	33	21	606
1 February	- ditto	-	1	1	9	12	8	—	1	3	—	33	21	661
1 March	- ditto	-	1	1	9	12	8	—	1	3	—	33	21	661
1 April	- ditto	-	1	1	9	12	8	—	1	3	—	33	21	658
1 May	- ditto	4th & 65th regiments	1	—	7	11	7	1	2	3	1	33	18	631
1 June	- ditto	-	1	1	9	14	7	1	2	3	1	31	12	651
1 July	No return of Artillery	4th reg. 3 companies	1	—	1	3	1	—	—	—	—	6	3	109
1 August	- ditto	-	1	—	1	2	1	—	—	1	—	6	3	109
1 September	- ditto	-	1	—	1	2	1	—	1	—	—	6	3	111
1 October	- ditto	-	1	—	1	3	1	—	1	—	—	6	3	111
1 November	- ditto	-	1	—	2	4	2	—	1	—	—	6	3	109
1 December	- ditto	-	1	—	2	4	2	—	1	—	—	6	3	108

RETURN of the Effective Officers, Non-commissioned Officers, and Gunners, of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, present at HALIFAX during the Year 1793.

Woolwich, 27th February 1794.

Capitains.	2	2	7	56	2	69
Subalterns.						
Non-commissioned Officers.						
Gunners.						
Drummers.						
Total.						

Total

OFFICERS NAMES.

Captain Thomas Desbrisay.
Captain Lieutenant Henry Rogers.

1st Lieutenants { Lawrence H. Newton, lately promoted to Captain Lieutenant.
John Nutting.

(Signed) J. MACLEOD, B. Major.

No. 1
from
To
August

No. 14
from
18th
At H
17
October

No. 13. *Extracts of the Journal of the Halifax Packet Boat, to and from Falmouth, New York, and Halifax, in a Letter from Mr. Todd, of 30th Sept. 1793.*

1793.

August 2d. Arrived at New York two French seventy-fours, one frigate, and two sloops, from the Chesapeake.

3d. Ambuscade, said to have had 10 men killed, and 16 wounded; her complement on board 450 men.

The French men of war in New York, were

Le Jupiter, of 74 guns, and 4 carronades on the poop.

L'Eole 74 do. ditto.

Le Surveillant 36 do.

L'Ambuscade 36 do.

A ship of 20 do.

A brig named Cerf, of 10 guns.

One East-India merchant ship, and 14 West-India ships, arrived under convoy of the above ships, and one East-India ship there before.

15th. Spoke a pilot boat coming in, who told us the Concord French frigate was on the coast; soon after which I positively was informed she was in Boston.

From the best intelligence I could procure, the under-mentioned French privateers were cruising on the coast of America:

Jacobin	-	12 guns,	60 men
Antigeorge	-	12 —	60
Conqueror of Bastile	-	10 —	50
Carmagnole	-	14 —	100
Little Democrat	-	16 —	120
Citizen Genet	-	15 —	120
Friend of the Law	-	8 —	40
Sans Culotte schooner	-	10 —	50
Sans Culotte chebeck	-	12 —	100
Sanspariel	-	16 —	150
Impromptu	-	8 —	43
Orlando Furioso	-	12 —	100
National Razor	-	14 —	130

The Republican, of 5 guns, and 50 men, taken by the Boston before her action with L'Ambuscade.

No. 14. *Extracts from the Journals of the Chefferfield Packet Boat, from Falmouth to Halifax and New York, in Mr. Todd's, of the 18th December 1793.*

At Halifax, 1793. The Captain and nine hands, by order of his Excellency the Governor, to hold themselves in readiness to assist in transporting troops, in case of necessity, where

where requisite. The ship to go into Bedford Basin to receive on board some of the women inhabitants of the town. Militia, to the amount of 5 or 600, marched into Halifax.

At New York,

At 7. Abreast of Sandy Hook; at 8, passed the French ship *Perdrix*; at 8½, came too to stop tide with the small bower, furled sails; at 5, A. M. weighed and made sail; at 5½, the *Perdrix* fired a gun, on which we fired one also. Found laying here the French frigate *L'Ambuscade*.

11. At 11, P. M. received on board the mail. The French brig *L'Impatiente* hove short, and got all ready for sea.

No. 15. *Extract from the Journal of the Portland Packet, when lying at Halifax, dated December 3d, 1793. Transmitted by the Post Master General, Jan. 8th, 1794.*

Arrived here a schooner from New York, which brought the following intelligence:—The *Chesterfield* packet failed for England on the 14th ultimo, and had a very narrow escape of being taken in going into Sandy Hook. The French force consisted of the *Ambuscade* frigate (which began to dismantle when the schooner failed); *Perdrix*, 22 guns, (laying at the Hook); *Cerf*, 10 guns, (cruizing for the October packet). At Boston, *Marfeillois*, 22 nine pounders; and the *Good Intent*, 16 guns, lately captured from the English. In the Chesapeake, the *Astrea*, 10 guns. The schooner brought intelligence, that the French fleet had failed from New York, the people had mutinied, and the fleet bore away for France.

No. 16. *Statement of the different Batteries at Halifax in Nova Scotia, with the Number of Guns mounted on each Battery; transmitted 23d February 1794, to Mr. Secretary Dundas by Captain Hodgson, late Brigade Major at Halifax, Nova Scotia.*

- 1st.—Sandwich Point; two twelve pounders, on the top of a very high hill excellently constructed for the annoyance of shipping.
- 2d.—Point Pleasant Battery; from four to six twenty-four pounders.
- 3d.—A most excellent new battery, a few hundred yards from the one at Point Pleasant, called Major-General Ogilvie's Battery; it consists of six twenty-four pounders, and commands a very extensive range of the harbour.
- 4th.—M'Lean's Battery, situated on the Halifax side, nearly opposite George's Island, from six to twenty-four pounders, a mortar and howitzer of a large size, and a very excellent furnace for heating shot.
- 5th.—The Citadel Hill, consisting of a number of guns of different sizes, several thirteen inch mortars, some howitzers, also a battery on Barbette of three twelve pounders, well calculated to annoy shipping when they come opposite the town of Halifax.

6th.

6th.—A battery of some twenty-four pounders, erected by Commissioner Duncan at the Dock Yard, a good defence for that place against shipping; also another on the opposite shore (commonly called the Dartmouth side of the water) equally beneficial for the same purpose.

7th.—George's Island, situated in the middle of Halifax harbour, near the town; a most excellent battery on it of six twenty-four pounders, and two good furnaces for heating shot; also several other guns of various sizes, making in the whole from fourteen to sixteen.

8th.—The Eastern Battery, situated nearly opposite to George's Island (on the Dartmouth side of the water), several guns mounted there, which will play with good success on vessels coming up the harbour.

The above statement of the different batteries at Halifax, in Nova Scotia, is given to the best of Captain Hodgson's recollection; though he believes, on the whole, it is tolerably accurate.

No. 17. *Copy of a Letter from Mr. Stephens to Mr. King; dated Admiralty Office, 6th March 1794.*

(Four Inclosures.)

SIR,

Admiralty Office, 6th March 1794.

I have it in command from my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to send you herewith, for the information of Mr. Secretary Dundas, copies and extracts of such letters as have been received from Captain George, Commanding Officer on the Halifax station, since the commencement of the war, as relate to the state of defence of the province of Nova Scotia. I am,

Sir,

Your most obedient

Humble servant,

PHP. STEPHENS.

J. King, Esq. &c. &c.

No. 18. *Extract of a Letter from Captain Rupert George, Commander of his Majesty's Ship Hussar, to Mr. Stephens; dated Halifax Harbour, 27th August 1793.*

In my letter of the 21st of June, I had the honour to inform you of the arrival of the Alligator from Saint Pierre's the day preceding; and in that of July 1st, that the two regiments were embarked, and that I proposed accompanying the Alligator and her convoy clear of the coast of America. I have now the honour to request that you will inform my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that we sailed hence the 3d July, and on the 16th, being in the latitude $32^{\circ} 20'$, and the longitude $54^{\circ} 00'$, I parted company with Captain Affleck and the convoy: It was my intention, in my way back, to have ranged along the Coast of America, but was prevented

prevented by light and contrary winds, not being able to get nearer the coast than eighty leagues, in the latitude $37^{\circ} 00'$, when I was informed by an American vessel, that two French ships of 74 guns, and five frigates, had arrived from Cape François with a large convoy in the Chesapeake. I thought it my duty to return here direct with that intelligence, and I arrived the 5th of August. We have since heard that the French squadron arrived at New York the 2d of August, and his Majesty's Consul General at Philadelphia informed me that an attack might possibly be made upon Halifax or Newfoundland. We are here perfectly at ease respecting an attack upon us, having between 40 and 50 heavy cannon (32 and 24 pounders) mounted on the different batteries, one 13-inch mortar, and two 8-inch howitzers, with furnaces for heating shot. *The regular troops, including artillery, and the Governor's corps, do not exceed 600.* But we have two battalions of militia, officers, and artificers of the yard, civil branch of ordnance, seamen in merchant vessels, and the crew of his Majesty's ship under my command; the latter I propose to place in some of the batteries, in case of an attack from line of battle ships.

Philip Stephens, Esq.

No. 19. *Extract of a Letter from Captain Rupert George, of his Majesty's ship Hussar, to Mr. Stephens; dated Margor's Beach, Entrance of Halifax Harbour, 9th September 1793.*

I wrote fully by the Halifax packet, which sailed the 29th ultimo, since which nothing particular has happened. The state of security which I then believed this place to be in against any attack from the enemy, has since received an increase, by the erection of another battery of six 24 pounders, and the mounting some other guns; and the principal ports on this coast having been supplied with cannon, small arms, and ammunition, are supposed to be sufficiently strong (at least) to resist an attack from privateers.

No. 20. *Copy of a Letter from Captain Rupert George, Commander of his Majesty's Ship Hussar, to Mr. Stephens; dated at Halifax, 12th October 1793.*

SIR,

Having, on the appearance of his Majesty's ship under my command off this harbour, had the good fortune to meet the Queen Charlotte packet, bound for Falmouth, I have a minute to inform their Lordships that I sailed hence on the 23d ult. since which I anchored at Boston, and have been off New York and Philadelphia; and, notwithstanding former accounts, have reason to suppose that the two French line of battle ships, le Jupiter and l'Eole, and the frigates, have some expedition in view, previous to the departure from this coast for France. I can only add, that we are (in my opinion) prepared to receive them, should their intention be to attack this part of the province.

(Signed)

RUPERT GEORGE.

No. 21.
Majesty's
9th Nov

Since r
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conjecture

No. 21. *Extract of a Letter from Captain Rupert George, of his Majesty's Ship Hussar, to Mr. Stephens; dated Halifax Harbour, 9th November 1793.*

Since my letters of 9th September and 12th October, duplicates of which I have the honour to inclose, I have been lying, in his Majesty's ship under my command, between George's Island and the eastern battery, to be in readiness to man the batteries in that quarter with part of my ship's company, in consequence of advices received from the Consul General at Philadelphia, and Captain Armstrong at New York, corroborated by information received by his Excellency Lieutenant-Governor Wentworth from the same quarter, that le Jupiter was new manned and officered, and (instead, as before expected, that she would return to France) had joined l'Eole of 74 guns, Concord and Precieuse of 40, and two armed brigs, and that they were preparing to go upon some expedition under the command of Admiral Cercey in l'Eole, supposed to the northward, from the quantity of warm clothing laid in; Mr. Bond supposed against Halifax, or the fisheries. To ensure the safety of this place, Lieutenant-Governor Wentworth called in about 1200 of the county militia to join the two battalions of the town, but I supposed they were too well informed of our strength and resources to risk an attack. In order that his Excellency Sir Richard King should have the above intelligence, I thought it my duty to hire a small brigantine (a shallop at this season being too small), and sent copies of the letters I received from Mr. Bond, the Consul General, and Captain Armstrong, to the Vice Admiral at St. John's the 17th, and duplicates of them the 21st, by a sloop loaded with cattle; and at the same time informed his Excellency that it was conjectured they meant to intercept the Newfoundland convoy.

An ACCOUNT, shewing how the Money given for the Service of the Year 1793 has been disposed of, distinguished under the several Heads, until the 8th Day of April 1794, and the Parts remaining unsatisfied, with the Deficiency thereupon.

SERVICES.

NAVY.

For wages, and wear and tear of the Navy, and victualling thereof for 25,000 men, including 5000 marines, from the 1st day of January 1793 —

1,235,000 0 0

For wages, and wear and tear of the Navy, and the victualling thereof for 20,000 additional men, including 4000 marines, from the said 1st day of January 1793 —

988,000 0 0

For the ordinary of the Navy, including half pay to sea and marine Officers, for the year 1793

669,205 5 10

Towards the buildings, rebuildings, and repairs of ships of war in his Majesty's yards, and other extra works over and above what are proposed to be done upon the heads of Wear and Tear, and Ordinary, for the year 1793 —

387,710 0 0

Towards paying off and discharging the Navy debt

575,000 0 0

Sums voted or granted	Sums paid.	Remains to be paid.
£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
3,854,915 5 10	3,613,743 1 10 ³ / ₄	241,172 3 11 ¹ / ₄

ORDNANCE.

For Ordnance land service —

448,374 19 9

For additional ditto —

281,079 18 8

For Ordnance sea service —

65,000 0 0

ORDNANCE.

For Ordnance land service	—	—	448,374	19	9
For additional ditto	—	—	281,079	18	8
For Ordnance sea service	—	—	65,000	0	0
For additional ditto	—	—	52,000	0	0
For defraying the expences of services performed by the Office of Ordnance for land service, previous to the 31st of December 1783, and not provided for by Parliament	—	—	320	6	9
For defraying the expences of services performed by the Office of Ordnance for land service, and not provided for by Parliament, in 1791	—	—	15,095	16	3
For defraying the expences of services performed by the Office of Ordnance for land service, and not provided for by Parliament, in 1792	—	—	6,826	15	4
For defraying the expences of services performed by the Office of Ordnance for sea service, and not provided for by Parliament, in 1791	—	—	32,068	15	4
			900,766	12	1

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FORCES, &c.

For defraying the charge of 17,344 effective men for guards, garrisons, and other his Majesty's land forces in Great Britain, Guernsey, and Jersey, including the charge of the pay of commissioned and non-commissioned Officers and private men, the

ACCOUNT OF THE APPLICATION OF

23

Sums voted or granted.	Sums paid.	Remains to be paid.
£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.

charge of clothing of non-commissioned Officers and private men, the charge of agency, and charge of allowances to be made to Captains, Paymasters, Surgeons, Riding-masters, and Serjeants, for the year 1793

£. s. d.
579,174 18 1½

For defraying the charge of 9945 effective men, commissioned and non-commissioned Officers included, being an augmentation of his Majesty's forces from the 24th day of January 1793, to the 24th day of December following, both inclusive, and of one regiment of foot, from the 25th day of December 1792, to the 24th day of December 1793, both inclusive

437,837 1 11

For defraying the charge of one hundred independent companies of foot, to be raised in the year 1793

130,950 0 0

For defraying the charge of an augmentation to the first regiment of dragoon guards, from the 24th of January 1793, to the 24th of December following, both inclusive, and of the charge of accoutrements, &c. for the augmentation to the cavalry and infantry

59,066 3 7

For defraying the charge of the recruiting and contingencies of his Majesty's forces, of the allowance of bread and necessaries to the troops in Great Britain, and on account of poundage to be returned to the infantry, for the year 1793

117,500 0 0

For maintaining his Majesty's forces and garrisons in the Plantations, those in garrison at Gibraltar, and a corps of foot in New South Wales, including the charge of the pay of the commissioned Officers, non-

For maintaining his Majesty's forces and garrisons in the Plantations, those in garrison at Gibraltar, and a corps of foot in New South Wales, including the charge of the pay of the commissioned Officers, non-commissioned Officers, and private men, the charge of clothing of the non-commissioned Officers and private men, the charge of agency, and the charge of allowances to be made to Captains, Paymasters, Riding-masters, Surgeons, and Serjeants, for the year 1793.

351,385 1 10

On account for the pay necessary to be advanced to one regiment of light dragons, and nine battalions of foot for service in East India, for the year 1793.

8,323 17 10½

For defraying the difference between the charge of the British and Irish establishments of five regiments of foot serving in Gibraltar and the West Indies, for the year 1793.

11,559 17 11

For the pay of the General, and General Staff Officers in Great Britain, for the year 1793.

6,409 8 0

For the pay of additional General and General Staff Officers in Great Britain, for the year 1793.

32,520 0 0

For the allowance to the Paymaster General of his Majesty's forces, to the Secretary at War, to the Commissary General of Musters, to the Judge Advocate General, to the Comptrollers of the Accounts of the Army, their Deputies and Clerks, including the expence of their respective offices, and amount of Exchequer fees to be paid by the Paymaster General, for the year 1793.

52,964 6 7

ACCOUNT OF THE APPLICATION OF

	Sums voted or granted.		Sums paid.		Remains to be paid.	
	£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.
For the reduced Officers of his Majesty's land forces and marines, for the year 1793	156,797	18 4				
For defraying the charge of allowances to the several Officers and private Gentlemen of the two troops of horse guards reduced, and to the superannuated Gentlemen of the four troops of horse guards, for the year 1793	202	1 8				
For the several Officers late in the service of the States General, for the year 1793	3,000	0 0				
For defraying the charge of allowances to several reduced Officers of his Majesty's British American forces, for the year 1793	4,907	10 0				
For the reduced Officers of his Majesty's British American forces, for the year 1793	55,092	10 0				
For defraying the charge of full pay to supernumerary Officers of his Majesty's forces for the year 1793	13,940	8 11				
For defraying the charge of pensions to be paid to the widows of commissioned Officers, and expences attending the same, for the year 1793	9,313	6 3				
For defraying the charge of the in and out pensioners of Chelsea Hospital, and of the expences of the said Hospital, for the year 1793	177,995	2 1				
For defraying the charge of a corps of light dragoons for service in Jamaica, of several regiments of foot, and of supernumerary private men of his Majesty's forces, from their respective commencements to the 24th day of December 1792, inclusive	15,639	5 11				

For the reduced Officers of his Majesty's land forces and marines, for the year 1793

For defraying the charge of allowances to the several Officers and private Gentlemen of the two troops of horse guards reduced, and to the superannuated Gentlemen of the four troops of horse guards, for the year 1793

For the several Officers late in the service of the States General, for the year 1793

For defraying the charge of allowances to several reduced Officers of his Majesty's British American forces, for the year 1793

For the reduced Officers of his Majesty's British American forces, for the year 1793

For defraying the charge of full pay to supernumerary Officers of his Majesty's forces for the year 1793

For defraying the charge of pensions to be paid to the widows of commissioned Officers, and expences attending the same, for the year 1793

For defraying the charge of the in and out pensioners of Chelsea Hospital, and of the expences of the said Hospital, for the year 1793

For defraying the charge of a corps of light dragoons for service in Jamaica, of several regiments of foot, and of supernumerary private men of his Majesty's forces, from their respective commencements to the 24th day of December 1792, inclusive

For defraying the charge of the embodied militia of several counties in South Britain, for the year 1793

For defraying the charge of contingencies, and of the allowance of bread and necessaries, and of poundage for the embodied militia, for the year 1793

For defraying the charge of the embodied militia of several counties in South Britain, for the year 1793	278,122	14	2
For defraying the charge of contingencies, and of the allowance of bread and necessaries, and of poundage for the embodied militia, for the year 1793	72,000	0	0
For defraying the charge of the embodied militia of several counties in South Britain, from their respective commencements to the 24th of December 1793, inclusive	285,458	2	6
For defraying the charge of contingencies, of the allowance of bread and necessaries, and of poundage for the embodied militia, for the year 1793	65,000	0	0
For defraying the charge of clothing for the embodied militia for the year 1793	140,000	0	0
For defraying the charge of one regiment of foot, of several fencible regiments in North Britain, and of a corps of fencibles in the Isle of Man, from the 26th day of March 1793, to the 24th day of December following, both inclusive	109,682	16	9
For defraying the charge of a corps of Hanoverian troops taken into the service of Great Britain from the 22d of February 1793, to the 14th of December following, both inclusive	238,253	14	8
For defraying the charge of levy money, camp equipage, and other expences attending the Hanoverian forces in the service of Great Britain on their taking the field	217,598	0	0
Towards defraying the extraordinary expences of his Majesty's land forces, and other services, from the			

ACCOUNT OF THE APPLICATION OF

Sums voted or granted.	Sums paid.	Remains to be paid.
£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
3,968,559 8 3	3,968,559 8 3	
9,802 5 0	—	9,802 5 0
5,315 0 0	5,315 0 0	
4,400 0 0	4,400 0 0	
1,900 0 0	1,900 0 0	
1,800 0 0	1,800 0 0	
6,700 0 0	6,700 0 0	
1,182 10 0	1,182 10 0	
4,250 0 0	4,250 0 0	

25th day of December 1791, to the 24th day of December 1792, and not provided for by Parliament

£. s. d.
337,865 1 2

For defraying the expence that will attend the repair of the damage done to the Cobb at Lyme Regis by the violent storm that happened on the 24th and 25th of January 1792

For defraying the charge of the civil establishment of the province of Nova Scotia from the 1st of January 1793, to the 1st of January 1794

For defraying the charge of the civil establishment of the province of New Brunswick in America, from the 24th of June 1793, to the 24th of June 1794

For defraying the charge of the civil establishment of the island of St. John in America, from the 1st of January 1793, to the 1st of January 1794

For defraying the charge of the civil establishment of the island of Cape Breton in America, from the 24th of June 1793, to the 24th of June 1794

For defraying the expence attending the civil establishment of the province of Upper Canada, from the 31st of December 1792, to the 31st of December 1793

For defraying the charge of the salaries of the Governor, and civil officers in the island of Newfoundland, from the 1st of April 1793, to the 1st of April 1794

For defraying the charge of the civil establishment of the Bahama islands, in addition to the salaries now paid to the public officers, out of the duty fund, and other incidental charges attending the same, from the 1st day of January 1793, to the 1st day of January 1794

For defraying the charge of the salary of the Chief Justice of the Bermuda of Somers Islands, from the 24th day of June 1793, to the 24th day of June 1794

For defraying the charge of the salary of the Chief Justice of the island

For defraying the charge of the salary of the Chief Justice of the Bermuda of Somers Islands, from the 24th day of June 1793, to the 24th-day of June 1794	580	0	0	—	580	0	0
For defraying the charge of the salary of the Chief Justice of the island of Dominica, from the 1st day of January 1793, to the 1st day of January 1794	600	0	0	—	600	0	0
For defraying the charge of the civil establishment of New South Wales, from the 10th of October 1792, to the 10th of October 1793	4,657	18	0 $\frac{1}{2}$	4,657	18	0 $\frac{1}{2}$	
For the expence of the new roads of communication, and building bridges in the highlands in North Britain, for the year 1793	4,500	0	0	4,500	0	0	
For repairing, maintaining, and supporting, the British forts and settlements on the coast of Africa	13,000	0	0	13,000	0	0	
Towards enabling the trustees of the British Museum to carry on the execution of the trusts reposed in them by Parliament	3,000	0	0	3,000	0	0	
To make good the like sum which has been issued by his Majesty's orders, pursuant to addresses	37,657	17	3	37,657	17	3	
To make good the like sum which has been issued to the commissioners appointed to inquire into the state of woods, forests, and land revenues, belonging to the Crown	1,600	0	0	1,600	0	0	
To make good the like sum which has been issued to John Dally, gent. towards defraying the necessary charges incurred in and about the execution of an act authorising the Commissioners of the Treasury to appoint 2 Commissioners of the Customs in England, and one of those in Scotland, to inquire into the annual amount of the emoluments of the officers of the customs and other persons employed in that revenue	500	0	0	500	0	0	
To make good the like sum which has been issued for defraying the expence of sending provisions and other articles to the settlement in New							

ACCOUNT OF THE APPLICATION OF

	Sums voted or granted.		Sums paid.		Remains to be paid.	
	£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.
South Wales, and of the amount of the bills drawn and of other expences incurred on account of the convicts at that settlement	56,370	15 8	56,370	15 8		
To make good the like sum which has been issued in consequence of the expences incurred in carrying on the prosecution against Warren Hastings, Esq.	3,727	12 0	3,727	12 0		
To make good the like sum which has been issued to Duncan Campbell, Esq. for the expence of confining, maintaining, and employing convicts on the River Thames	11,021	4 5	11,021	4 5		
To make good the like sum which has been issued to James Bradley, Esq. for the expence of maintaining and guarding convicts in Langstone and Portsmouth harbours	12,407	1 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	12,407	1 4 $\frac{1}{2}$		
To make good the like sum issued to Thomas Cotton, Esq. for defraying the expence of allowances for the relief of American civil officers and others who have suffered on account of their attachment to his Majesty's Civil Government	26,000	0 0	26,000	0 0		
To make good the like sum issued to Thomas Cotton and William Chinnery, Esqrs. for defraying the expences of removing of black people to the settlement of Sierra Leona	15,643	4 6	15,643	4 6		
To make good the like sum issued to William Chinnery, Esq. for defraying the expence of purchasing provisions for the relief of 650 emigrants from the Highlands of Scotland who arrived at Nova Scotia from Glasgow in great distress; and for other services	386	15 6	386	15 6		
To make good the like sum issued to Charles Goddard, Esq. to satisfy a bill drawn by Sir Morten Eden, his Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the King of Prussia, for money dif-						

South Wales, and of the amount of the bills drawn and of other expences incurred on account of the convicts at that settlement
 To make good the like sum which has been issued in consequence of the expences incurred in carrying on the prosecution against Warren Hastings, Esq.
 To make good the like sum which has been issued to Duncan Campbell, Esq. for the expence of confining, maintaining, and employing convicts on the River Thames
 To make good the like sum which has been issued to James Bradley, Esq. for the expence of maintaining and guarding convicts in Langstone and Portsmouth harbours
 To make good the like sum issued to Thomas Cotton, Esq. for defraying the expence of allowances for the relief of American civil officers and others who have suffered on account of their attachment to his Majesty's Civil Government
 To make good the like sum issued to Thomas Cotton and William Chinnery, Esqrs. for defraying the expences of removing of black people to the settlement of Sierra Leona
 To make good the like sum issued to William Chinnery, Esq. for defraying the expence of purchasing provisions for the relief of 650 emigrants from the Highlands of Scotland who arrived at Nova Scotia from Glasgow in great distress; and for other services
 To make good the like sum issued to Charles Goddard, Esq. to satisfy a bill drawn by Sir Morten Eden, his Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the King of Prussia, for money dif-

buried by him at Berlin, for the use of his Royal Highness the Duke of York

To make good the like sum issued to Joseph White, Esq. for paying the affluents upon the salaries of the Commissioners for auditing the Public Accounts, and their officers, for land tax, for the years 1788 and 1789

buried by him at Berlin, for the use of his Royal Highness the Duke of York
 To make good the like sum issued to Joseph White, Esq. for paying the
 assentments upon the salaries of the Commissioners for auditing the Public
 Accounts, and their officers, for land tax, for the years 1788 and 1789
 To make good the like sum issued to William Pollock, Esq. to reimburse
 expences incurred by the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the
 State and Condition of the Isle of Man.
 To make good the like sum issued to sundry persons, to be applied to-
 wards charitable gratuities, and passage money to sundry American
 Loyalists, desirous of becoming settlers in Upper Canada, and other
 services for the use of the said settlement
 To make good the like sum issued to James Marquis of Salisbury, Lord
 Chamberlain of his Majesty's household, to enable him to pay bills for
 works done at the House of Commons, by order of the Speaker and
 Committee, for the better ventilating and warming the said house
 To make good the like sum issued to Thomas Cotton, Esq. to reimburse
 to sundry persons who carried on the Whale Fishery in Nova Scotia,
 and who arrived at Milford Haven, in order to settle in this kingdom,
 the losses sustained by them in consequence of the sale of their pro-
 perty by such removal, and for their passage
 For payment of such part of the principal and interest thereon as shall
 become due on or before the 10th day of October 1793, on all the
 orders made out pursuant to an Act of the 28th year of his present
 Majesty's reign, for giving relief to such persons as have suffered in
 their rights and properties during the late unhappy dissensions in
 America, and for making compensation to such persons as have suf-
 fered in their rights, in consequence of the cession of the province of
 East Florida to the King of Spain

Vol. IV.

5,897	5	0	5,897	5	0
1,068	4	0	1,068	4	0
1,146	8	0	1,146	8	0
13,800	15	0	13,800	15	0
1,453	16	4	1,453	16	4
1,420	3	0	1,420	3	0
218,141	7	4	215,396	19	8
			2,644	7	7

ACCOUNT OF THE APPLICATION OF

	Sums voted or granted.		Sums paid.		Remains to be paid.	
	£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.
	58,500	17 6	55,130	0 3½	3,370	17 2½
	200,000	0 0	200,000	0 0		
	112,774	12 2	112,774	12 2		
	226,640	3 9½	226,640	3 9½		
	225,325	2 4	225,325	2 4		
	2,055,597	6 9	2,055,597	6 9		
	3,648,104	13 5	3,648,104	13 5		
	123	5 6	123	5 6		

For payment of such part of the principal and interest thereon as shall become due on or before the 10th day of October 1793, on all the orders made out pursuant to an Act of the 30th year of his present Majesty's reign, for granting relief to such persons as have suffered in their rights and properties during the late unhappy dissensions in America, and for making compensation to such persons as have suffered in their rights, in consequence of the cession of East Florida to the King of Spain, &c. To be issued and paid to the Governor and Company of the Bank of England, to be by them placed to the account of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt

To make good the deficiency of the Malt Duty granted for the service of the year 1791, at Lady Day 1793

To make good the deficiency of the Land Tax granted for the service of the year 1791, at Michaelmas 1793

To make good the deficiency of the grants for the service of the year 1792

To pay off and discharge the principal sum of 200,000l. in Exchequer Bills, made out by virtue of an Act 32 Geo. 3. and charged further upon the first Aids to be granted in Parliament for the service of the year 1793, together with the interest and charges attending the same

To pay off and discharge the principal sum of 3,500,000l. in Exchequer Bills, made out by virtue of one other Act of 32 Geo. 3. and charged further upon the first Aids to be granted in Parliament for the service of the year 1793, together with the interest and charges attending the same

To John Wilmot, Esq. late one of the Commissioners for American Claims, for a Clerk employed to deliver out certificates signed by the said late Commissioners

For rewards to the officers of the Exchequer, for managing, directing, and paying the orders made out for the relief of American sufferers

To the Usher of the Exchequer for necessaries furnished the officers for ditto

To the Secretaries to the Commissioners appointed for issuing Exchequer

1,160	0 0	450	0 0	710	0 0
122	3 9½	122	3 9½		

MONEY GRANTED FOR THE YEAR 1793.

247

paid late Commissioners

For rewards to the officers of the Exchequer, for managing, directing, and paying the orders made out for the relief of American sufferers
 To the Usher of the Exchequer for necessaries furnished the officers for ditto
 To the Secretaries to the Commissioners appointed for issuing Exchequer Bills to a limited amount, by an Act 33 Geo. 3. cap. 29. for the purposes therein mentioned, for expences incurred in the execution of the said Act
 To John Farhill, Esq. Secretary to the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt, for salaries of the officers and incidental expences of the said commission
 To the Governor and Company of the Bank of England, for receiving, paying, and accounting for 4,500,000*l.* raised by annuities for the service of the year 1793
 To ditto, for discounts on prompt payments to the contributors of the said 4,500,000*l.*
 To ditto, to be by them distributed and paid to and amongst the proprietors of the several fortunate tickets in the lottery, for 675,000*l.* established by an Act 33 Geo. 3.
 To ditto, for receiving the contributions to the said lottery, paying the prizes, &c. and for discounts on prompt payments to the contributors of the said lottery
 For the charges and expences in preparing and drawing the said lottery, and for taking in tickets and delivering out certificates in lieu thereof
 To enable his Majesty to defray any extraordinary expences which may be incurred for the service of the year 1793, and to take such measures as the exigency of affairs may require

1,160	0	0	450	0	0	710	0	0
122	3	9½	122	3	9½			
6,000	0	0	6,000	0	0			
1,435	19	6	1,435	19	6			
3,626	1	3	3,626	1	3			
52,546	11	9	52,546	11	9			
500,000	0	0	500,000	0	0	500,000	0	0
1,281	9	1	1,281	9	1			
12,400	0	0	1,700	0	0	10,700	0	0
1,500,000	0	0	1,500,000	0	0			
17,799,718	15	5½	17,030,139	1	8½	769,579	13	9

Whereof has been issued to the Paymaster of the Forces for army services
 Issued to the Bank of England to pay bills of exchange drawn by Claude

£. s. d.
 838,811 1 2

Scott, Esq. on the Commissioners of the Treasury, for corn purchased
 for the use of the public

383,001 11 5

Issued to pay bills drawn by sundry persons on the said Claude Scott, Esq.
 for corn purchased by him for the public service, and made payable by
 the Bank

78,187 7 5

Issued to the Right Honourable Robert Hobart, to be applied to any uses
 to which his Majesty's revenue in the kingdom of Ireland is applicable,
 and to be repaid in such manner as his Majesty shall hereafter direct, with
 the consent of the Parliament of that kingdom

100,000 0 0

Issued to Thomas Bainbridge, Esq. to be applied to the same purposes, and
 to be repaid in the same manner, with the consent of the Parliament of
 Ireland

100,000 0 0

1,500,000 0 0

Towards satisfying the Services.

There remains in the Exchequer of contributions to a lottery
 of the consolidated fund

£. s. d.
 9,141 6 3
 285,415 13 7½

294,556 19 10½

Deficiency of Ways and Means to answer the services

475,022 13 10½

WAYS and MEANS for answering the same, viz.

£.	s.	d.	
2,000,000	0	0	By 4 <i>l.</i> per pound on land.
750,000	0	0	By the duty on malt, continued anno 1793.
435,696	1	7½	Surplus of the Consolidated Fund, from the 5th of January 1793.
3,464,000	0	0	Out of the surplus of the Consolidated Fund, from the 5th of January 1793, to the 5th of April 1794.
4,500,000	0	0	By annuities.
675,000	0	0	By a lottery.
2,000,000	0	0	By Exchequer Bills, charged on the aids granted for the service of the year 1794.
2,000,000	0	0	By Exchequer Bills, charged farther on ditto.
1,500,000	0	0	By Exchequer Bills, charged on the first aids granted for the service of the said year 1794.
17,324,696	1	7½	
473,022	13	10½	Deficiency of Ways and Means.
17,799,718	15	5½	

MEMORANDUM.

The ARREARS of former SUPPLIES remaining unpaid, for which money is provided, are as follow, viz.

	£.	s.	d.
For the late African Company's creditors	900	12	10
For Georgia bills, residue of £15,496 19s. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	570	17	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
To make good the deficiency of 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. granted anno 1785	816	13	5 $\frac{1}{2}$
To complete £600, granted anno 1788, for the salary of the Chief Justice of Dominica	388	10	6
To complete £600, granted anno 1789, for the salary of ditto	87	18	11
To pay principal and interest of orders made out pursuant to an act 28 Geo. III. for the relief of American sufferers, and persons who have suffered by the cession of East Florida, and charged on the supplies per anno 1789	2,000	15	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
To pay ditto of orders made out pursuant to the said act, and charged on the supplies for the year 1790	1,451	7	10 $\frac{1}{4}$
To pay ditto of orders made out pursuant to an act 30 Geo. III. and charged on ditto	205	17	10 $\frac{1}{4}$
To pay ditto of orders made out pursuant to an act 28 Geo. III. and charged on the supplies for the year 1791	1,564	17	10 $\frac{1}{4}$
To pay ditto of orders made out pursuant to an act 30 Geo. III. and charged on ditto	5,117	8	11 $\frac{1}{4}$
To pay ditto of orders made out pursuant to an act 28 Geo. III. and charged on the supplies for the year 1792	1,694	13	11
To pay ditto of orders made out pursuant to an act 30 Geo. III. and charged on ditto	3,399	13	9 $\frac{1}{4}$
For the civil list establishment of Cape Breton, and charged on the supply for the year 1791	1,600	0	0
For salaries, &c. to the officers of the Bahama Islands, charged on ditto	2,014	0	0
For the salary of the Chief Justice of Dominica	300	0	0
	22,114	8	11 $\frac{1}{2}$

Presented the 8th of APRIL 1794, by
W. SPEER.

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EXPENCE of Services performed by the Office of Ordnance, pursuant to his Majesty's Orders, and not provided for by Parliament.

On account of Debt to 31st December 1783.

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Paid debts incurred to 31st December 1783, and which have been settled since that period	—	—	—	576	19	5

On account of 1792.

GRENADA.

Paid on account of current service and contingencies	—	—	—	925	4	3
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On account of 1793.

FLANDERS.

Brass and iron ordnance, powder, shot, shells, and other stores	135,917	16	9			
Paid on account of the purchase of horses for the train of artillery, pay of civil officers and contingencies	27,484	18	1			
Pay of two companies of Royal military artificers, consisting of 200 men, from 1st April, to 31st December 1793, also for tools for the said companies	3,915	17	10			
				167,318	12	8

Expedition under the Command of Sir CHARLES GREY.

Brass and iron ordnance, powder, shot, shells, and other stores	89,274	19	7			
For temporary barracks for the troops	41,000	0	0			
Paid on account of civil officers and contingencies	1,064	3	8			
				131,339	3	3

Expedition under the Command of the EARL of MOIRA.

Brass and iron ordnance, powder, shot, shells, and other stores	43,442	10	0			
For the purchase of 300 horses	7,500	0	0			
For contingencies	737	16	0			
				51,680	6	0

TOULON.

TOULON.

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Brass ordnance, ammunition, and stores sent from Gibraltar	—	—	—	8,663	10	0

WEST INDIES.

Paid for contingencies, on account of the expeditions from the Leeward Islands, and from Jamaica	6,064	3	9			
Pay of one company of Royal military artificers, consisting of 100 men, from 11th September, to 31st December 1793, also for tools for the said company	1,005	2	2	7,069	5	11

NEWFOUNDLAND.

For tools and stores sent	—	—	—	223	14	0
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HALIFAX.

For stores sent	—	—	—	66	7	8
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UPPER CANADA.

Pay of one company of Royal military artificers, consisting of 100 men, from 11th September, to 31st December 1793, also for tools for the said company	—	—	—	1,005	2	2
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BERMUDA.

Brass ordnance, ammunition, and stores sent	—	—	—	4,742	0	3
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GIBRALTAR.

For barrack bedding sent	—	—	—	1,276	4	9
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JERSEY.

For a supply of stores sent	2,580	10	11			
Paid on account of extraordinary expences for defence of the island	1,250	0	0	3,830	10	11

GUERNSEY.

For a supply of powder and stores sent	5,394	14	7			
Paid on account of extraordinary expences for defence of the island	2,000	0	0	7,394	14	7

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Vol. IV

ALDERNEY.

For a supply of ammunition and stores sent	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
	—	—	—	2,962	16	5

ISLE OF MAN.

For powder and stores sent	—	—	—	259	18	6
For barrack bedding sent to the established barracks at						

Plymouth	—	—	1,028	13	2
Portsmouth	—	—	617	4	0
Dover	—	—	311	4	2
Sheerness	—	—	92	3	0
Chatham	—	—	595	17	11
Gravesend and Purfleet	—	—	8	13	11
Woolwich	—	—	357	15	2
The Savoy, Knightsbridge, and the Tower	—	—	1,891	9	8
Hull	—	—	222	9	2
Ile of Man	—	—	33	19	0
Guernsey	—	—	993	10	0
Jersey	—	—	2,004	12	0
				8,157	11 2

DEFENCE of the COASTS.

For iron ordnance and stores sent	—	—	5,233	3	2
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Regiment of Artillery, Engineers, and Military Artificers.

Pay of an augmentation of 10 Sergeants, 20 Bombardiers, 10 Drummers, 100 Gunners, 1 Surgeon's Mate, 10 Serjeant Conductors, and 100 Drivers to each of the 4 Marching Battalions of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, with the levy money for the same, and the difference of pay between 4 Lieutenant Colonels and 4 Majors; and also an augmentation of 1 Colonel Commandant, 1 Second Colonel, 1 Lieutenant Colonel, and 1 Major, to the Invalid Battalion of the said Regiment, between 11th September, and 31st December, 193

12,121 1 4

Pay of an augmentation of 30 Gentlemen Cadets to the Company belonging to the Royal Regiment of

Vol. IV.

p p

Artillery,

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Artillery, from 11th September to 31st December 1793, inclusive	420	0	0			
Pay of a Company of Invalid Artillery, for the service of the Island of Bermuda, from 9th July, to 31st December, 1793, both days included	687	17	4			
Pay of an augmentation of 433 men, and 618 horses, to the Brigade of Royal Horse Artillery, between 11th September, and 31st December, 1793	7,391	19	9			
For the purchase of horses, levy money, arms, and accoutrements, gun carriages, ammunition, and baggage waggons, forge carts, and harness for the Brigade of Royal Horse Artillery	34,592	14	4			
Pay of five companies of Royal Irish Artillery, in the service of Great Britain, between 20th August, and 31st December, 1793	2,513	14	0			
Pay of an augmentation of one Lieutenant Colonel to the corps of Royal Engineers from 5th to 31st December 1793	20	5	0			
Ammunition and stores, for the field Train of Artillery in England	6,247	16	6			
				63,995	8	3
Arms, Tents, and Ammunition for the Army.						
Arms to the Life Guards, Horse and Dragoon Guards, to sundry regiments of Dragoons, to the three regiments of Foot Guards, and to sundry regiments of Foot, also to the Royal regiment of Artillery and Corps of Royal Military Artificers	107,941	17	11			
Deduct already granted on this account in the estimates for the year 1793	45,000	0	0			
	62,941	17	11			
Tents to the Horse and Dragoon Guards, and to sundry regiments of Dragoons and Foot	8,413	3	0			

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EXPENCES OF THE OFFICE OF ORDNANCE.

255

Deduct already granted on this account in 1793	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
	3,318	15	0						
				5,094	8	0			
Ammunition to sundry regiments for service				2,797	4	6			
Forge carts for service to sundry regiments of cavalry				545	7	0			
							71,378	17	5
Arms, Tents, and Ammunition for Militia.									
Arms delivered to sundry regiments of Militia				41,496	8	2			
Tents supplied to sundry regiments of Militia				8,383	3	3			
Ammunition delivered to sundry regiments of Militia for exercise and service				5,546	19	1			
							55,426	10	6

WOOLWICH.

For additional storehouses and stables	16,355	10	5			
Extraordinary expences of labourers and artificers at the Royal Laboratory	3,030	3	8			
				19,385	14	1
For the purchase of saltpetre, ordnance and stores, and expences incurred in the several ports of Great Britain, and on foreign stations, on account of the navy, so far as bills have appeared, to the 5th December 1793, beyond the allowance for sea service, on the votes for 45,000 seamen for 1793				612,921	15	4
				30,350	3	6
Unprovided				643,271	18	10

ESTIMATE of the Charge of the Office of Ordnance, for the Year 1794.

LAND SERVICE.

ORDINARY.

Salaries and rents to the master general, principal officers, clerks, and attendants employed at the Tower 15,509 18 0

P P 2

And

And at the following places, viz.

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Laboratory at Woolwich, and for proving powder	2,076	5	0			
Inspector of artillery at do. and for proving guns	1,377	12	6			
Superintendent of military machines at ditto	310	5	0			
Hampton Court and St. James's, Windsor and Greenwich	226	0	0			
Woolwich	570	0	0			
Purfleet	605	2	6			
Gravesend and Tilbury	255	0	0			
Chatham	663	17	6			
Upnor Castle	144	15	0			
Sheerness	380	0	0			
Feverham	583	17	6			
Waltham Abbey	523	17	6			
Dover	120	0	0			
Portsmouth	823	17	6			
Priddyhard	303	17	6			
Plymouth	653	17	6			
Keyham Point	170	0	0			
Storekeepers at Pendennis, Scilly Island, Chester Castle and Liverpool, Carlisle, Tinnmouth Castle, Berwick, Cliffords Fort, Hull, Yarmouth, and Landguard Fort	430	0	0			
Guernsey	448	2	6			
Jersey	448	2	6			
Isle of Man	100	0	0			
Rent for use of land and houses	520	17	0			
	27,245	5	0			

One half of which is charged to the sea service 13,622 12 6

Pay of Civil Officers and Artificers at	North Britain	-	-	554	10	0
	Gibraltar	-	-	1,381	7	6
	Jamaica	-	-	273	15	0
	St. Christopher	-	-	584	0	0
	Antigua	-	-	584	0	0
	Dominica	-	-	584	0	0
	St. Vincent	-	-	584	0	0
	Barbadoes	-	-	584	0	0
	Grenada	-	-	584	0	0
	Tobago	-	-	584	0	0
	Bahama Islands	-	-	219	0	0
	Quebec	-	-	861	15	0
	Halifax	-	-	680	10	0
	Annapolis	-	-	91	5	0
	New Brunswick	-	-	629	12	6
	St. John's and Placentia in Newfoundland	-	-	693	10	0

Pay

EXPENCES OF THE OFFICE OF ORDNANCE.

257

	£.	s.	d.
Pay of master gunners at the several garrisons and batteries in Great Britain, and of the gunners at St. James's Park and the Tower of London, with their allowance for coals and candles.			
Charges incident to the Tower and the several other forts, garrisons and places under the Ordnance in Great Britain, Guernsey, and Jersey, in taking remains of stores, pay of labourers, books, paper, coals, candles, cartage, messages, postage of letters, and other contingencies	3,416	17	6
Ordinary repairs of buildings, bridges, gates, platforms, barracks, storehouses, making new and repairing old carriages in the several small forts, castles, garrisons, and other places, under the Ordnance in Great Britain, Guernsey, and Jersey	18,000	0	0
Furnishing beds, bedsteads, sheets, &c. and repairing the same at the several barracks, forts, castles, and garrisons, in Great Britain, Guernsey, and Jersey	15,000	0	0
Expence of stores and ammunition for garrisons, and small stores for the common duty of regiments in Great Britain, Guernsey, and Jersey	4,379	4	7
Cleaning and repairing small arms in the Tower	6,000	0	0
Pay of the corps of royal engineers	2,000	0	0
Pay of the royal regiment of artillery consisting of 5,742 men, officers included	12,282	5	0
Pay of an augmentation of 4 Captains, 8 first Lieutenants, and 200 drivers to the four marching battalions of the Royal regiment of artillery	155,547	15	10
	5,110	0	0
	160,657	15	10
Pay of a brigade of Royal horse artillery, consisting of 673 men, officers included, and 900 horses	51,293	12	8
Pay of first gunners still remaining on the war establishment	705	13	4
Establishment of the civil officers, professors, and masters of the Royal military academy at Woolwich	212,657	1	0
	2,327	15	0
		Est.	

EXPENCES OF THE OFFICE OF ORDNANCE.

Establishment of draughtsmen in the Tower of London for service in Great Britain and foreign gar- rifons	£.	s.	d.
	2,066	5	0
Pay of superannuated and disabled men, half pay of reduced officers, widows' pensions, and allowances to officers for good services, pursuant to his Ma- jesty's warrant	20,720	17	9
Sums to be paid at the Treasury and at the Exche- quer, for fees on the sum of 1,345,008l. 2s. 6d. being the amount of this estimate	2,216	10	0
Ordinary	324,162	14	2

EXTRAORDINARIES, 1794.

NEWFOUNDLAND.

For repairs of the fortifications, bar- racks, and quarters for officers, current service, and contingencies	2,000	0	0
For fuel for the troops at St. John's, Placentia, St. Pierre, and Miquelón	2,000	0	0
For a supply of stores	1,000	0	0
	5,000	0	0

NOVA SCOTIA.

For building a powder magazine	4,000	0	0
For current service and contingencies	3,000	0	0
	7,000	0	0

QUEBEC.

For current service and contingencies	5,000	0	0
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UPPER CANADA.

Pay of a company of Royal military artificers	1,924	1	8
For current service and contingencies	2,000	0	0
	3,924	1	8

BERMUDA.

For current service and contingencies	1,000	0	0
For a supply of stores	1,000	0	0
	2,000	0	0

BAHAMA ISLANDS.

For current service and contingencies	1,500	0	0
For a supply of stores	1,500	0	0
	3,000	0	0

JAMAICA.

JAMAICA.

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
For repairs, current service, and contingencies	2,000	0	0			
For a supply of stores	2,000	0	0			
				4,000	0	0

ANTIGUA.

For current service and contingencies	4,000	0	0
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ST. CHRISTOPHER.

For current service and contingencies	4,000	0	0
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DOMINICA.

For current service and contingencies	4,000	0	0
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BARBADOES.

For current service and contingencies	4,000	0	0
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ST. VINCENT.

For current service and contingencies	4,000	0	0
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GRENADA.

For current service and contingencies	4,000	0	0
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TOBAGO.

For current service and contingencies	4,000	0	0
Pay of a company of Royal military artificers for the service in the islands in general	1,924	1	8

ST. DOMINGO.

Pay of engineers and civil officers attending a train of artillery, also on account of contingencies	5,000	0	0
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GIBRALTAR.

	£.	s.	d.	
Pay of a corps of Royal military artificers	4,492	10	10	
Forage for the cattle employed on the works	2,280	0	0	
Towards the necessary repairs and improvements of the works	16,800	0	0	
For repairs of barracks, officers quarters, storehouses, and magazines	2,500	0	0	
Contingencies in the engineer's department	2,000	0	0	
Contingencies in the artillery and storekeeper's departments	1,827	9	2	
				30,000 0 0

JERSEY.

JERSEY.

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
For repairs and contingencies	4,000	0	0			
Pay of half a company of Royal military artificers	—	962	0 10			
				4,962	0 10	

GUERNSEY.

Towards carrying on the fortifications at Fort George, and repairs at other places in the island	4,000	0	0			
Pay of half a company of Royal military artificers	—	962	0 10			
				4,962	0 10	

SCOTLAND.

For repairs of the several forts, castles, and barracks in Scotland, current service, and contingencies	8,695	0	0			
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NORTH EAST DISTRICT.

For current service and contingencies	—	2,000	0	0		
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LANDGUARD FORT.

For repairs, current service, and contingencies	2,000	0	0			
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CINQUE PORTS.

For repairs, current service, and contingencies	4,000	0	0			
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CHATHAM.

	£.	s.	d.			
For repairs of the barracks at Chatham, and for repairs at Gillingham, Upnor Castle, Cockhamwood, and Hownefs, current service, and contingencies	—	9,075	18 4			
For repairs of the Lines	—	1,000	0 0			
Pay of a company of Royal military artificers	—	1,924	1 8			
				12,000	0 0	

SHEERNESS.

For repairs of the breakwaters, current service, and contingencies	—	3,000	0 0			
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GRAVESEND and TILBURY.

For repairs of the works	—	3,000	0 0			
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FEVERSHAM.

For repairs of the buildings	—	4,000	0 0			
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VOL. IV

PORTSMOUTH.

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
For repairs of old works and other buildings at Portsmouth, and various places in the division	3,681	18	4			
In farther part of the charge for necessary repairs to complete and improve the old works round the town	1,500	0	0			
In full of the charge for completing the works round the Common	4,039	7	0			
In farther part of the charge for completing Cumberland Fort	3,500	0	0			
Pay of a company of Royal military artificers	1,924	1	8			
				14,645	7	0

GOSPORT.

For contingencies, repairs of barracks and the lines	1,298	0	0			
In farther part of the charge for necessary repairs of the lines at Gosport, Weevil, and Priddyshard	350	0	0			
For erecting a powder magazine, making a cistern, and laying platforms, at Fort Monckton	4,085	0	0			
In farther part of the charge to continue the sea wall erected in the front of Haslar Hospital, to Fort Monckton, in order to prevent the sea from breaking into Haslar Lake, and for making the ground equally solid in all parts behind the said wall	1,000	0	0			
Pay of a company of Royal military artificers	1,924	1	8			
				8,657	1	8

PLYMOUTH.

For repairs of the barracks, lines, and citadel, and for repairs at St. Nicholas Island, Dartmouth, Pendennis, and St. Maw's Castles, and at Scilly Island, current service, and contingencies	2,941	11	4			
To complete the repairs of the lines round the dock	3,134	7	0			
Pay of a company of Royal military artificers	1,924	1	8			
				8,000	0	0

WOOLWICH.

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
For contingencies, and repairs of barracks and officers quarters	9	4	3	9		
For erecting barracks for officers and men of the Royal Horse Artillery, and additional storehouses and stables	22,877	1	3			
Pay of a company of Royal military artificers	1,924	1	8			
				25,745	6	8

ROYAL LABORATORY.

Towards the extraordinary charge of labourers and artificers	6,000	0	0
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ISLE OF MAN.

For repairs and current service	3,000	0	0
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WALTHAM ABBEY.

For repairs of buildings	4,000	0	0
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DEFENCE of the COASTS.

For repairing and re-establishing the batteries on the coasts, and putting them in a state of defence	5,000	0	0
For providing temporary barracks for the troops on the coasts	10,000	0	0
	15,000	0	0

ROYAL REGIMENT of ARTILLERY, and CORPS of ROYAL MILITARY ARTIFICERS.

	£.	s.	d.
For contingencies of artillery	6,000	0	0
For contingencies of the brigade of Royal Horse Artillery	2,000	0	0
Levy-money for an augmentation of 200 drivers to the marching battalions of the Royal Regiment of Artillery	1,050	0	0
Allowance for bread and additional clothing for artillery in Great Britain, Guernsey, and Jersey	6,291	7	8

Allowance

EXPENCES OF THE OFFICE OF ORDNANCE.

267

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Allowance for bread and additional clothing for the brigade of Royal Horse Artillery in Great Britain	1,943	19	2			
Allowance for bread and additional clothing for the Royal military artificers in Great Britain	1,768	14	0			
Pay of five companies of Royal Irish artillery, in the service of Great Britain, consisting of 500 men, officers included	12,136	5	0			
On account for the purchase of horses, and for the parks of artillery in England	50,000	0	0			
				81,190	5	16

FLANDERS.

Pay of engineers, officers, conductors, and drivers, with a train of artillery attending his Majesty's forces in Flanders, also on account of contingencies	20,000	0	0			
Pay of two companies of Royal military artificers	3,848	3	4			
				23,848	3	4

Expedition under the Command of the Earl of MOIRA.

Pay of engineers, officers, conductors, and drivers, attending a train of artillery, also on account of contingencies	18,000	0	0
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Expedition under the Command of Sir CHARLES GREY.

Pay of engineers, officers, conductors, and drivers, attending a train of artillery, also on account of contingencies	20,000	0	0
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SALTPETRE.

For the purchase of 200 tons for land service from the East India Company	8000	0	0
Extraordinaries	377,573	9	6
Ordinaries	324,162	14	2
Ordinary and extraordinaries	701,735	3	8

992

Un-

MONIES ISSUED FROM THE CIVIL LIST.

		£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Unprovided	Debt to 31st Dec. 1783	576	19	5			
	1792, Land Service	925	4	3			
	1793 { Land Service	611,419	11	8			
	{ Sea Service	30,350	3	6			
					643,271	18	10
					1,345,008	2	6

Office of Ordnance,
28th Jan. 1794.

G. BERKELY, THO. BAILLIE.
J. ALDRIDGE,

AN ACCOUNT of MONIES issued out of the Civil List
Revenues, between the 14th February 1794, and the 5th
April following.

		£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
1794.	William Pollock, Esq. for ex-						
28 Feb.	pences of a Commission ap-						
	pointing Lord Hood, Sir						
	Gilbert Elliot, and Major						
	General O'Hara, Commis-						
	sioners at Toulon	139	7	6			
	Ditto for a Patent erecting a						
	Criminal Court of Jurisdic-						
	tion in Newfoundland	111	11	6			
	Ditto for fees, &c. on the above	21	15	6	272	14	6
7 Mar.	William Chinnery, Esq. to pay a bill drawn						
	by Commissary Palmer, for provisions sent						
	to New South Wales				3,117	8	6
	Ditto for expences of an arrest						
	of a convict escaped from						
	the ship Pitt, at the Cape						
	of Good Hope	35	15	4			
	Ditto for bills drawn by Ar-						
	thur Philip for the settle-						
	ment at New South Wales	151	9	6			
	Ditto for the passage of Mr.						
	and Mrs. Mariden, and						
	Mary Smith, to the above						
	settlement	56	10	0			
	Ditto for the furniture of the						
	chapel at ditto	8	1	0			
	Ditto for fees, &c. on the						
	above	21	5	6	273	1	4
							Ditto

MONIES ISSUED FROM THE CIVIL LIST.

265

Ditto for a certificate granted by Mr. Bulkeley for trans- porting blacks from Nova Scotia to Sierra Leone -		£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
		453	19	10			
Ditto for demurrage of a vessel chartered to carry blacks from ditto to ditto -		33	15	0			
Ditto for fees on the above		33	8	6	521	3	4
14 Mar.	Mr. Wilmot, for the suffering clergy and laity of France -				9,528	7	6
21	—Mr. Davison, for clothing, &c. sent to New South Wales -				452	15	8
	Mr. Chinnery, for ditto, for convicts on their passage to ditto -				214	2	9½
28	—Mr. Cotton, to pay bills drawn by Senhouse Wilson, for rebuilding the pier, &c. in Douglas harbour, in the Isle of Man				249	0	6
4 April	Ditto, for said service -				648	15	6
<i>Whitehall Treasury Chambers, April 9, 1794.</i>					15,277	9	7½

GEORGE ROSE.

TOTAL

TOTAL of ARMY ESTIMATES.

	<i>£.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Guards and Garrisons	1,492,812	12	2
Forces in the plantations	677,682	12	4
General and staff officers	97,389	1	1
Chelsea out-pensioners	126,887	4	1
Extraordinaries of the army	808,805	14	4
Difference between British and Irish establishments	50,279	13	4
Troops in East India	197,505	11	10
Additional to ditto	8,323	17	10½
Recruiting land forces and contingencies, &c.	219,000	0	0
Full pay to supernumerary officers	39,118	16	7
Allowances to the Paymaster General, &c. &c.	64,790	18	3
Half pay and allowances to reduced officers of the land forces	147,000	0	0
Ditto to the officers of the late Scotch brigade	3,000	0	0
Ditto to the officers of the American forces	60,000	0	0
Widows' pensions	9,921	19	3
Embodied militia and fencibles	687,420	14	0
Contingencies, &c. for ditto	160,000	—	—
Clothing for the militia	93,653	3	9
Corps transferred from the Irish to the British establishment	185,667	15	6
Scotch roads and bridges	4,500	0	0
Chelsea in-pensioners	24,850	1	9
Levy money, &c. for augmentations to the forces	210,000	0	0
Foreign troops	969,323	0	0

An ACCOUNT, shewing the Surplus of the Consolidated Fund remaining in the Exchequer, for the Disposition of Parliament, upon the 5th Day of April 1794.

The surplus of the Consolidated Fund remaining in the Exchequer for the disposition of Parliament, upon the 5th day of April 1794, amounts to the sum of Two Hundred Thirty-one Thousand Eight Hundred Forty-one Pounds Sixteen Shillings and Tenpence.

Exchequer, April 8, 1794.

JOHN R. MARLOW.

STANDING

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STANDING ORDERS

OF THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Of the 7th Day of May 1794,

WITH RESPECT TO

NAVIGABLE CANALS, AQUEDUCTS, AND THE
NAVIGATION OF RIVERS.*7th May 1794.*

RESOLVED,

THAT when any application is intended to be made to the House, for leave to bring in a bill for making any cut or canal for the purposes of navigation; or any cut, canal, or aqueduct, for the purpose of supplying any city, town, or place, with water, or for varying or altering any such cut, canal, or aqueduct already made, or for making or improving the navigation of any river, or for altering any Act of Parliament, passed for any or either of those purposes (in which bill for altering any such act it is intended to give power for raising any further or additional rates, tolls, or duties, or for varying the line of such canal), notice of such intended application shall be inserted three times in the London Gazette, in the months of August and September, or either of them, immediately preceding the session of Parliament in which such application is intended to be made; and that such notice shall also be inserted in some one newspaper of every county, through which any such cut, canal, or aqueduct, is intended to be carried, or in which such cut, canal, or aqueduct, already made, is intended to be varied or altered, or in which such river, or such part thereof as is intended to be made navigable, or the navigation thereof to be improved, is situated (or if there is not any newspaper printed in or for such counties respectively, then in the newspaper of some county near or adjoining thereto), three times at the least, in the months of August and September, or either of them, immediately preceding the session of Parliament in which such application is intended to be made: And that such notice shall also be given at the general quarter session of the peace which shall be holden for every and each county, riding, or division, through which any such cut, canal, or aqueduct, is intended to be carried, or in which such cut, canal, or aqueduct, already made, is intended to be varied or altered, or in which such river, or such part thereof as is intended to be made navigable, or the navigation thereof to be improved, is situated,

at the Michaelmas preceding the session of Parliament in which such application is intended to be made, by affixing such notice to the door of the session houses respectively, where such general quarter sessions shall be holden.

Resolved, That such several notices shall contain the names of the parishes and townships, in, to, or through which any such cut, canal, or aqueduct is intended to be carried, varied, or altered, or or in which such river, or such part thereof as is intended to be made navigable, or the navigation thereof to be improved, is situated.

Resolved, That a map or plan of such intended cut, canal, aqueduct, or navigation, and also of any intended alteration in any cut, canal, aqueduct, or navigation, already made, shall be deposited, for public inspection, at the office of the Clerk of the Peace of every county, riding, or division, through which such cut, canal, aqueduct, or navigation, is intended to be carried, or such alteration is intended to be made, on or before the thirteenth day of September, previous to the session of Parliament in which such application is intended to be made; which map or plan shall describe the line of such intended cut, canal, aqueduct, or navigation, or of such intended alteration, and the lands through which the same is intended to be carried, together with a book of reference, containing a list of the names of the owners, or reputed owners, and occupiers, of such lands respectively.

Resolved, That before any application is made to the House for any or either of the purposes aforesaid, a previous application shall be made to the owners, or reputed owners, and occupiers of the lands through which any such cut, canal, aqueduct, or navigation, is intended to be carried, or any such alteration is intended to be made; and that separate lists shall be made of the names of such owners and occupiers, distinguishing which of them, upon such application, have assented to, or dissented from, such intended cut, canal, aqueduct, or navigation, or such alteration, or are neuter in respect thereto.

Resolved, That whenever any petition is presented to the House for any or either of the purposes aforesaid, there shall be presented, with such petition, the lists mentioned in the last preceding resolution, and also a duplicate of the map or plan so to be deposited at the office of the Clerk of the Peace, as aforesaid.

Resolved, That whenever any petition is presented to the House for making, varying, or altering, any such cut, canal, or aqueduct, as aforesaid, or making or improving the navigation of a river, there be annexed to the said petition an estimate of the proposed expence of such undertaking (in cases where provision is intended to be made for raising money to defray such expence), such estimate to be signed by the person or persons making the same; and, if such money is proposed to be raised by subscription, that there be also annexed to the said petition, an account of the money subscribed for that purpose, and the names of the subscribers, with the sums by them subscribed respectively.

Resolved,

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Vol. I

Resolved, That whenever any petition has been presented to the House for the purposes aforesaid, or any or either of them, the Committee, to whom such petition shall be referred, do examine, in the first place, how far the orders contained in the preceding resolutions have been complied with; and do report the same, at the time when they report the matter of any such petition, as it shall appear to them, to the House.

Resolved, That there be seven days between the first and second reading of such bills.

Resolved, That all persons, owners, or reputed owners, and occupiers of the land through which any such cut, canal, aqueduct, or navigation, is intended to be carried, or any such alteration is intended to be made, do personally attend the Committee to whom such bill shall be committed; or if they do not personally attend, do give their certificate in writing, signifying that they have seen a printed copy of the said bill, and do give their consent, or dissent, thereto, or declare themselves neuter in respect thereof; and that the hand writing of such owner or occupier to such certificate be proved by one or more witnesses before the said Committee; and that the said Committee shall report to the House, together with the report of the said bill, a list of the names of such persons who shall appear to have given such assent, or dissent, or to have been neuter, in respect to the said bill.

Resolved, That there be seven days between the day on which such bill is reported to the House, and the day when the said report shall be taken into consideration.

Resolved, That, after such bill is reported to the House, the bill, as amended by the Committee, be printed at the expence of the parties applying for the same, and be delivered at the door to the Members of the House, three days at least before such report shall be taken into consideration.

Resolved, That the Clerks of the Peace, or their respective deputies, do make a memorial, in writing, upon the plan and book of reference deposited with them in manner aforesaid, denoting the time at which the same was lodged in their respective offices; and do, at all seasonable hours of the day, permit any person to view and examine the same, and to make copies or extracts therefrom, such persons paying for the same the usual and accustomed fees paid to Clerks of the Peace, for the inspection, and copying of, or making extracts from, such records in their respective offices.

Resolved, That, in all bills presented to the House for any or either of the purposes aforesaid, provision be made for compelling the persons, who have subscribed towards carrying any such work into execution, to make payment of the sums severally subscribed by them; and also to oblige the Commissioners or Trustees to take security from their Treasurer, Receiver, or Collector, for the faithful execution of his office.

Ordered, That the said resolutions be made standing orders of this House.

Ordered, That the said resolutions be printed; and that copies thereof be sent to the Sheriffs of the several counties of Great Britain, and also to the Clerks of the Peace within England and Wales; and that the said Sheriffs do take care that copies of the same be published, and distributed within their respective counties and districts,

J. HATSELL,
Cl. Dom. Com.

W

M

Speech

Notice

Speech

The Secretary
chosen

The First
secretary

Speech of

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TO

Woodfall's Parliamentary Reports.

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TO

WOODFALL'S

PARLIAMENTARY REPORTS,

FOURTH SESSION, SEVENTEENTH PARLIAMENT, Jan. 21,
to July 11, 1794.

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